

IN THESE TIMES

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A WEDDING
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Oct. 4-10, 1978

50 Cents

John Briggs puts
anti-gay hysteria
on the California ballot.

Son-of-a-Bryant!

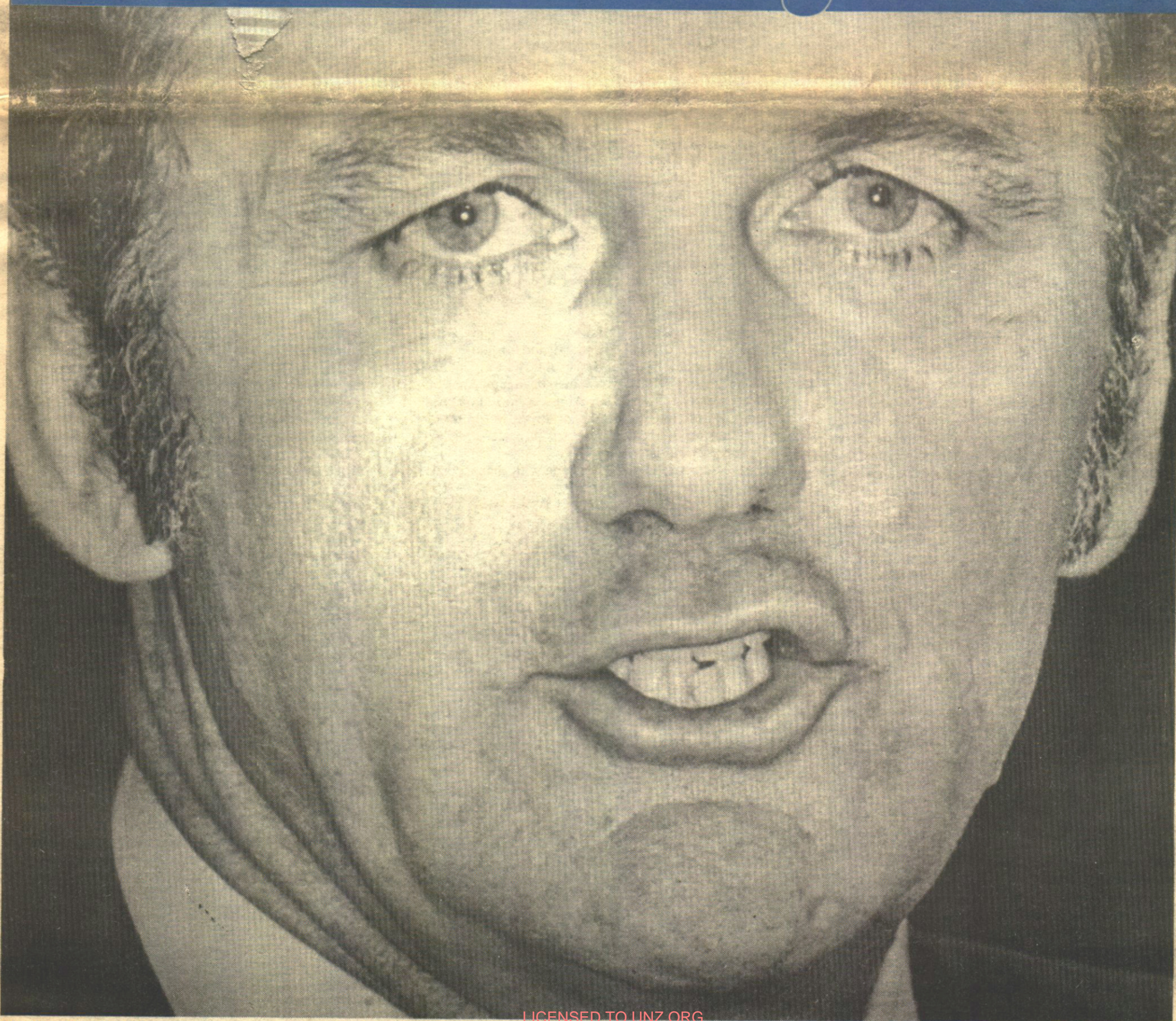


Photo by Dave Patrick

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THE INSIDE STORY

JOHN JUDIS



Ibrahim Abu-Lughod

Syria holds key to Camp David

Ibrahim Abu-Lughod is a professor of political science at Northwestern University. He is an internationally respected expert on the Mideast and Africa.

He is also a Palestinian, born in Jaffa, Palestine, in 1929, who emigrated to the U.S. in 1950 and worked his way through college. In 1967, in the wake of the Six-Day War, Abu-Lughod also became a full-fledged participant in the Palestinian cause.

He became a member of the Palestinian National Council, the highest decision-making body for the Palestinian movement. In 1977, when Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was still searching for a Palestinian representative who would be acceptable to the PLO, but whose legitimacy could not be denied by the U.S. and Israel, it was reportedly Abu-Lughod and Columbia professor Edward Said that Sadat hit upon.

When I went to talk to him last week, we transported our conversation from the Ivy-covered confines of Northwestern's Scott Hall to the Mediterranean House, a small, inexpensive restaurant in predominantly Jewish Skokie. "There's a special reason I wanted to take you here," Abu-Lughod said. When the residents had learned the restaurant's owner was Palestinian, they had instituted a boycott. The owner's attempt to deny PLO membership had been to no avail, and when we arrived, we were the only customers.

I expected from Abu-Lughod a semi-official denunciation of the Camp David Accords, and I did get that. He charged that they "condemn the West Bank to the permanent status of subordination and condemn Palestinians who are outside to the permanent status of exile."

But the scholar in Abu-Lughod kept asserting itself over his partisanship, forcing him to admire Jimmy Carter's diplomacy or to sympathize with Sadat's dilemmas even as he condemned their actions.

Jordan wants West Bank.

Abu-Lughod is naturally most concerned with the proposed agreement on the West Bank and Gaza. If the U.S. and Israel can win Jordan's cooperation, he thinks they may set off a "dynamic of negotiation" that will "get rid of radical forces for the next ten or 15 years and eliminate the Soviet Union as an influence."

But the dynamic may stall on the West Bank if Jor-

dan is not brought in. Jordan's King Hussein wants nothing less than an explicit promise of the West Bank's return. Given such a promise, he is willing to take his chances with the Palestinian majority and the PLO. "He is counting on the fact that the Palestinians on the West Bank, given the choice between permanent subordination to Israel and joining Jordan, will choose Jordan," Abu-Lughod explained.

But Israel is unwilling to give up the economic potential of the West Bank.

Abu-Lughod sees one other option for sustaining the West Bank agreement: get Syria into the negotiations. Israel is more willing to give up the Golan Heights than the West Bank. A Sadat-style agreement could be signed granting Syria the Golan Heights in exchange for diplomatic recognition of Israel and a promise to contain the Palestinian Liberation Organization in Lebanon and Syria.

With Syria brought in, and the PLO out of the picture, Hussein could be forced to enter the negotiations, and a compromise could be worked out on the West Bank, along the lines of an autonomous state federated with Jordan, and open to Israeli development.

But will Syria's President Hafez Assad follow Sadat to the negotiating table? How strong is the Syrian's commitment to the Palestinian cause?

Abu-Lughod paused at the question of Syria's commitment. "Syria is difficult," he said. "The Syrian people view Palestine as part of Syria historically. If you go into the smallest Syrian town, and they have a museum there, you will find pictures of Syrians who have gone from that town and died in Palestine in battle. It is a different kind of commitment from the Egyptians. Outside of the attachment to the soil, it is as strong as the Palestinians' commitment."

But there was, Abu-Lughod explained, another level to the problem. To meet its commitment, the Syrian government would have to beat Israel, and it cannot do that. "With the Arab front broken by Sadat, and the possibilities of more inter-Arab quarrels, Syria has to calculate shrewdly how it can keep its commitment, retrieve its national territory, and maintain itself."

Assad the dealer.

In this calculation, Abu-Lughod thinks that Assad will play a special role. "Kissinger discovered that Assad was a dealer," Abu-Lughod said. "He's not an inflexible son-of-a-bitch like Ho Chi Minh or Nasser or Arafat. Assad is more like Sadat. He can see the advantage of a bargain."

Previously, Israel was unwilling to give up the Golan, but now Abu-Lughod thinks it will in order to keep the negotiations going. If that happens, Assad will have to weigh the immediate rewards of getting the Golan back against his commitment to the Palestinians.

Abu-Lughod doesn't rule out Assad's going along with Israel and the U.S., but he doubts it will happen. Syria is much more independent economically than Egypt, and much less open to pressure from the U.S. or Saudi Arabia.

Military assumptions have also changed. With its superior numbers, Egypt used to be seen as the main military threat to Israel. Now, some Arab (and Syrian) strategists believe that "Egypt was never a serious threat to Israel. The actual threat comes from Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan because all the population centers are within reach of these fronts."

According to Abu-Lughod, Syria has already asked Jordan to form a united political and military front that would include Jordan, Syria, and the Palestinians. Syrian efforts in Lebanon have also been aimed at controlling that part of the front. Abu-Lughod thinks that Assad will not contemplate negotiations until he possesses the kind of credible military threat that such a unified front would give him.

If Syria and Jordan don't go along with the Accords,

Abu-Lughod expects "greater explosions in the Arab world, particularly in Lebanon." In the West Bank, Israel's only recourse will be "to create totally subversive Palestinian institutions." He predicts that pro-PLO mayors will be arrested and otherwise harassed during the next year.

Disaster for Sadat.

Abu-Lughod thinks that the Camp David Accords will only bring temporary popularity to Sadat. "Sadat has succeeded in selling the Egyptian people his decisions and in the short run he will be sustained, but after that, it will be disaster for him."

I thought Abu-Lughod was saying that Sadat's betrayal of the Palestinian cause would catch up with him, but he wasn't saying that at all. Abu-Lughod thinks neither peace nor war, Arab unity nor betrayal would solve Egypt's problems, which are rooted in its economy.

These problems are "literally insoluble," according to Abu-Lughod. "No amount of money that is poured into Egypt will solve them."

"Egypt has gotten close to \$6 billion in aid since 1973. Egypt today is worse off than it was in 1973. Of course, there is a special class that benefits from this money and that is the class Sadat belongs to, but in this way the money only aggravates the social contradictions. In terms of these contradictions, Egypt is worse off today than it was at the time of King Farouk."

The only solution, Abu-Lughod says, is to reorganize the basis of production, as China did after its revolution. "But Sadat is incapable of doing this. Nasser couldn't do it either. And there is no viable political movement that holds that kind of vision."

Abu-Lughod grants that at Camp David the Israelis "scored a victory which they didn't dream of. Israel's aspiration has always been a bilateral agreement."

He thinks Carter and Kissinger deserve credit for this. "Kissinger is the one who first perceived it was possible, and Carter succeeded in getting the Israelis to forego something they had never foregone before: the principle of not dismantling settlements."

In exchange for giving up this principle, the Israelis not only got a peace treaty with Egypt, they "got an Arab agreement to reject the principle of a Palestinian state."

PLO not worried.

Abu-Lughod sees the current PLO strategy as one of "keeping its options open." In contrast to when Sadat visited Jerusalem, the PLO has not called for street demonstrations against the Camp David Accords. "They are trying to avoid being held responsible for their failure. And they are trying to hold themselves free from inter-Arab skirmishes."

Abu-Lughod said that the PLO "is not as worried as I would have expected. They feel the Syrian national commitment is sufficiently strong and also the Arab national commitment."

As we were leaving the Mediterranean House, I asked Abu-Lughod if there was any way that the Accords were a victory for the Palestinians.

He rejected the Egyptian or Saudi view that they open the way to future negotiations. "In 1922," he said, "the British offered the Palestinians an administrative council, which would have included two-thirds Palestinians and one-fourth Jews. The Palestinians rejected it. It was the principle of giving the Jews more than their number allows them and accepting the idea of a mandate. Sixty years later you come up with even less than the administrative council. It's unbelievable."

But Abu-Lughod did see one paradoxical way in which the accords were a victory. "When you have to go through all that complication and trouble to contain several million people, that means these same people are going to come back and haunt you."

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IN THE NATION

ELECTIONS

Dukakis dumped in Massachusetts gubernatorial vote

By Sidney Blumenthal

BOSTON

INCUMBENT MASSACHUSETTS GOVERNOR Michael Dukakis was upset in the mid-September primary by Edward J. King, a law-and-order, business-oriented Democrat. While Dukakis was beaten by a candidate to his right, Democratic voters cast 70 percent of their ballots for two extremely liberal candidates for the U.S. Senate. Meanwhile, in the Republican primary U.S. Senator Edward Brooke, a moderate Republican turned back a challenge from the New Right's Avi Neison.

The Massachusetts election confirmed no clear trend to the right or left but rather revealed a schizophrenia on the part of the electorate, who seemed to be moving in several directions simultaneously. On the one hand the highly touted threat from the New Right, in Brooke's case, was quelled. On the other hand, an incumbent governor with a liberal image was upset by an unimaginative, conservative Democrat. Tip O'Neill, the U.S. Speaker of the House and Democratic sage from Massachusetts, analyzed the gubernatorial primary results as an "anti-guy" vote, not as an "anti liberal" vote.

At the center of this enigmatic vote is Gov. Michael Dukakis, at once a social liberal and fiscal conservative. One of Jimmy Carter's earliest supporters, Dukakis was personally and politically close to the President. But however close he was to Carter, Dukakis was more frequently cast as the New England version of California Governor Jerry Brown— young, bright, pragmatic, able to ride several political currents simultaneously—that is, until now.

Dukakis alienates everyone.

The difference between Brown and Dukakis was finally evident in the primary. Dukakis' ambiguities worked against him, unlike Jerry Brown's. Dukakis, while appearing to be similar to Brown, is really a distinct figure.

The obvious factor causing Dukakis' downfall is taxes. Before assuming office he vowed not to raise taxes; once in power now taxes were enacted. This would seem to be enough reason for him to arouse voter resentment. But the case for the tax revolt forcing Dukakis from office is not so simple.

The governor managed the state's fiscal crisis, moving Massachusetts from insolvency to the point where the state distributed millions of dollars to towns and cities to be applied for property tax relief.

The manner in which Dukakis handled virtually every issue, however, served to alienate some voter groups. He offended both liberals and conservatives, receiving acclaim from neither group for achievements that might have been to their liking. Dukakis was a good-government liberal—a manager with a distaste for the politics of patronage and favors. Although he practiced a modest lifestyle, taking the subway to the State House every morning with other commuters, he generated no ascetic mystique like his California

counterpart. The Massachusetts governor's statements weren't perplexing like Brown's, suggesting deeper insight. Dukakis was straight-forward and even banal. He wanted things to be clear-cut. Yet his policies were a mixture of liberalism and conservatism.

"Wielding a meat-cleaver."

When Dukakis cut the state human services budget he spoke blandly about wielding a "meat-cleaver." Liberals were offended by this stark image, especially considering the hapless victims—the retarded, crippled and unemployed. Brown, however, speaks of the age of lowered expectations and explains how less is more; he presents state budgetary problems as a philosophy lesson. Dukakis evoked the image of an emotionless Puritan, a throwback to the past.

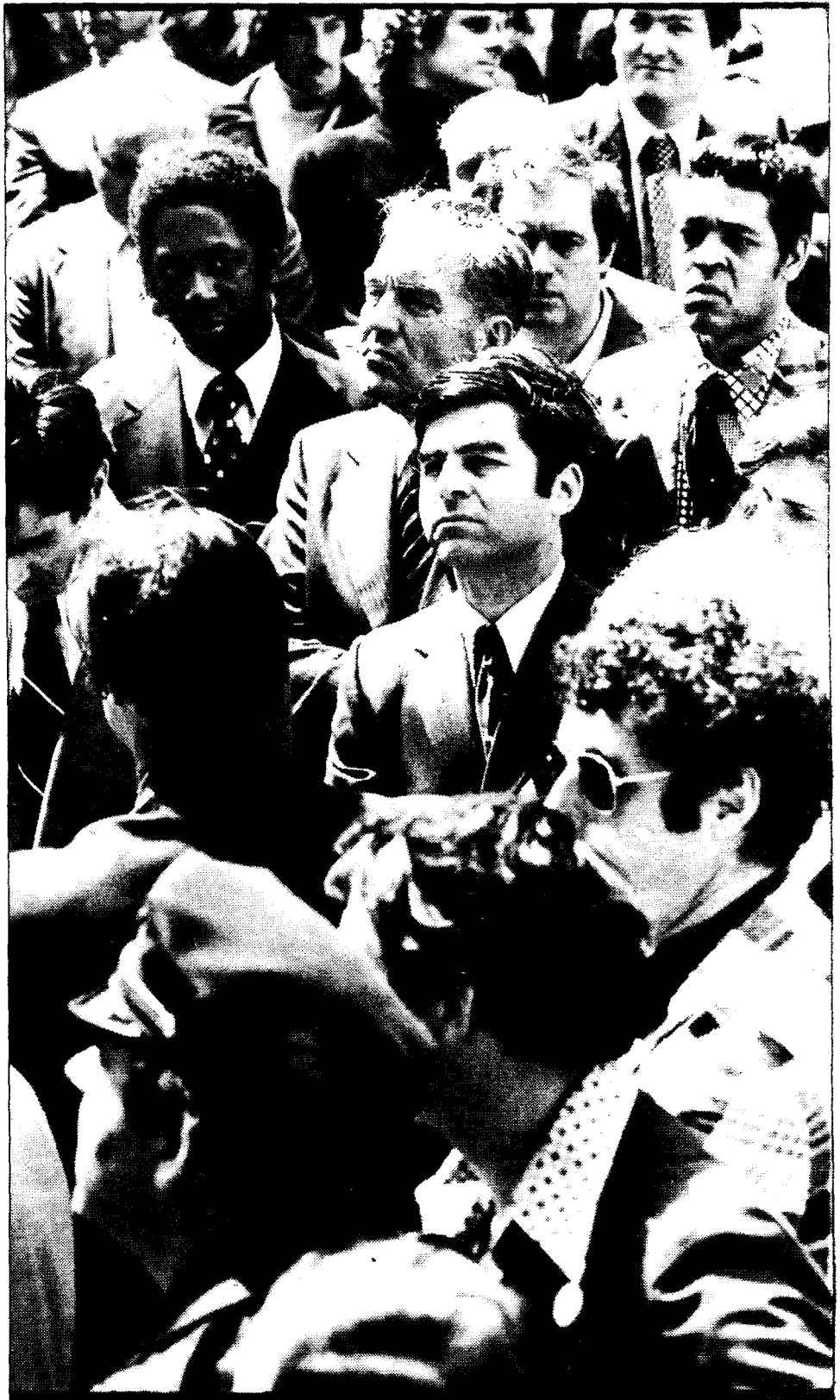
Even though Dukakis satisfied Massachusetts bankers with his handling of the state fiscal crisis he didn't earn their political support. Other conservatives attacked him for his good-government style reforms, particularly in the court system, where Dukakis attempted to end an inefficient set-up plagued by cronyism. His judicial appointments were almost uniformly notable, including the appointment of Margaret Burnham, a young black woman who was Angela Davis' attorney, to the Boston Municipal Court. Conservatives reviled the governor for his progressive tendencies, including his veto of a capital punishment bill passed by the state legislature. Meanwhile, liberals didn't give Dukakis credit for his positive accomplishments because he was so tainted in their minds for doing big business' bidding in the state financial crunch. And state workers despised him for vetoing their pay raise. Consequently, Dukakis failed to develop any real constituency. He repelled both the right and left. Dukakis really didn't see his goals as political. He viewed himself more as an administrator than as a politician. That is why he completely neglected to develop a strong organization for the primaries.

Among Democratic governors, Dukakis was regarded as a rising figure, part of a new wave. But he showed in his political conduct the dangers of mixing ideologies and programs. Without the strong personal appeal of a Jerry Brown, Dukakis discovered that he was without the vital support of traditional Democratic constituencies.

Conservative Democrat, liberal Republican.

Edward J. King, the man who defeated Dukakis, successfully rode the wave of anti-incumbent sentiment to victory. As head of the Massachusetts Port Authority, King was responsible for overseeing the expansion of Boston's Logan Airport into the surrounding community. His autocratic style made him contemptuous of the people from nearby working-class neighborhoods who protested the expansion.

King's program is almost a parody of conservatism. He takes a hardline stand



Incumbent Governor Michael Dukakis (center) marches against racism. He was defeated by a conservative Democrat.

on issues ranging from reinstating capital punishment to raising the drinking age. His manner is stiff, unexciting, crude.

The principal source of King's campaign funds came from those who were shut out of lucrative state contracts and the spoils of patronage by Dukakis. Among King's big financial supporters are real estate speculators, builders, construction unions, and assorted right-wing businessmen. It is ironic that while King preaches an anti-government, tax cut message, his support comes from those who thrive on state expenditures.

Refusing to bow to pressure from more prudent Democrats who want him to adopt a more moderate tack in the upcoming general elections, King has stuck adamantly to his conservative platform. He claims that the primary vindicated his position and he views himself as a tribune of the silent majority. Other Democrats, wary of supporting him on the ticket in November, have given him only tepid support. This should benefit his opponent, Republican Richard Hatch, a liberal state representative.

Massachusetts voters, perhaps the most liberal in the nation, are presented with an electoral twist in which the Democrat is the conservative and the Republican is the liberal.

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Sidney Blumenthal is the Boston correspondent for IN THESE TIMES.

The electorate in Massachusetts moved to the left and right simultaneously. It turned back the New Right and threw out a liberal governor.

ENVIRONMENT

Oil and Atlantic waters don't mix

By Karl Grossman

SAG HARBOR, N.Y.

ALITTLE OVER A MONTH AFTER Texaco announced it had struck gas under the ocean floor about 100 miles from Atlantic City, N.J., President Carter signed into law a bill that overhauls the Continental Shelf Lands Act of 1953.

The legislation is expected to spur oil and gas development on the Atlantic shelf, an extension of the continent that stretches up to 200 miles from shore. While exploration and the expansion of drilling has moved in recent years from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic, the Department of Interior (DOI) has been under pressure to realistically assess the environmental impact of such activity.

In response to a lawsuit that successfully blocked drilling for over two years, the DOI has produced a statement far more graphic and candid than earlier ones regarding the consequences of petroleum production off the environmentally sensitive and highly populated Atlantic coastline.

"Recovery of the affected [ocean] area from a large spill will be slow, probably requiring a minimum of ten years," says the DOI. It is now forecasting for the 20 to 25-year lives of the fields, four large oil spills of over 1,000 barrels, 58 spills of 50-1,000 barrels and 3,340 of up to 50 barrels on the 529,446 Mid-Atlantic acres it leased in 1976 for \$1.1 billion to the oil industry for drilling, and the additional 774,273 acres it wants to lease in the same area in February.

And that's "assuming that pipelines will be used to transport the petroleum to shore," a questionable assumption. Tanker transport will increase spillage.

Leasing the continental shelf.

The first exploratory well was leased to Exxon in the mid-Atlantic on March 29 of this year. The DOI is now moving to "open up" what it defines as the south Atlantic to oil drilling, accepting \$100 million in April from oil companies to lease 244,807 acres off North and South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

Only a new lawsuit is blocking the Interior's plan to promote oil drilling in the North Atlantic. The agency is seeking to immediately lease 882,443 acres on the George's Bank, one of the globe's foremost fishing grounds. Charged in the action with failing to protect fishing resources, Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus—as aggressive as his predecessors in "accelerating" U.S. offshore oil and gas drilling leases—declared: "All areas of the country must share in the urgent task of helping to meet our need to find new domestic sources of oil and gas."

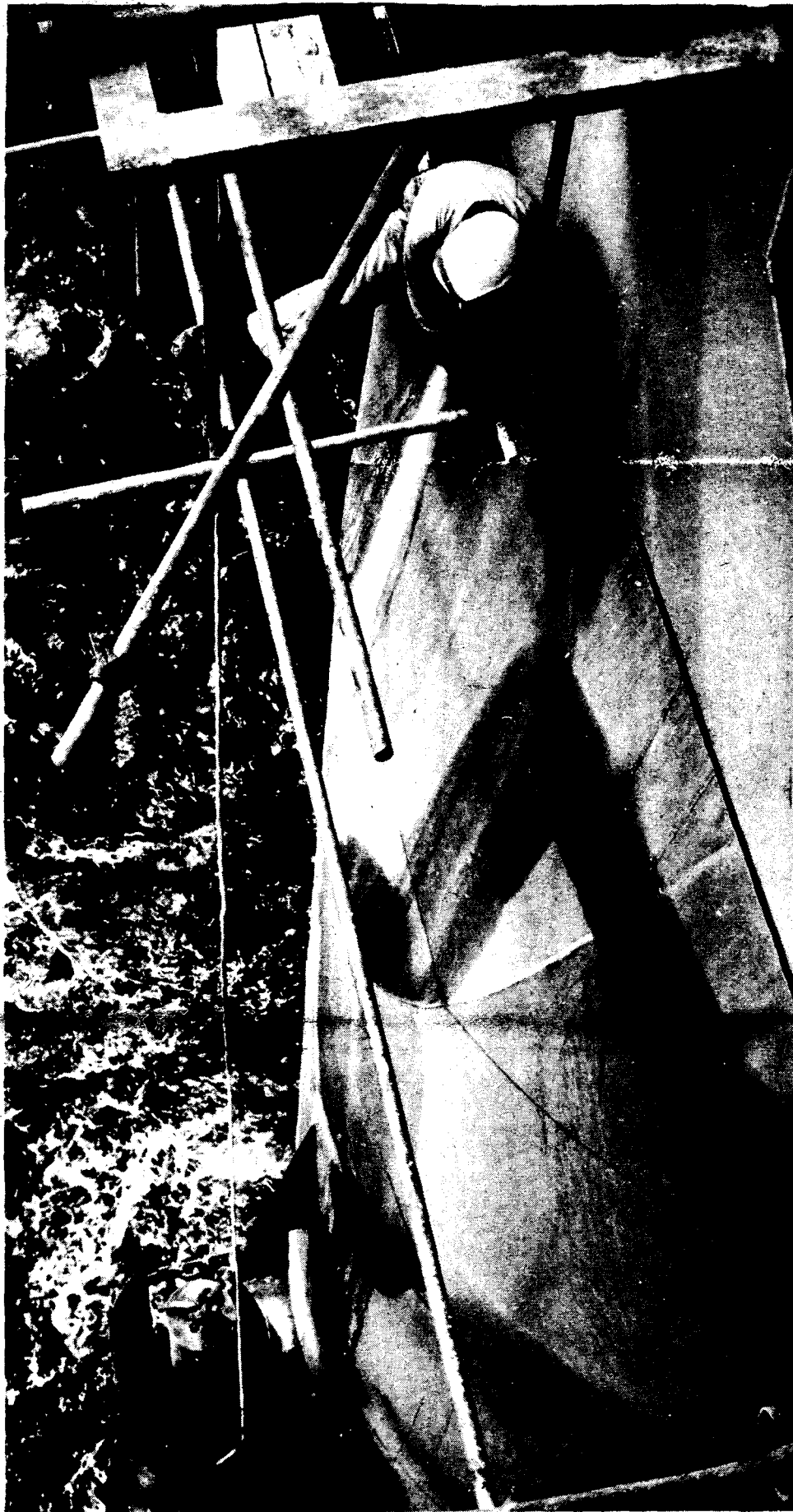
"This is the first tangible proof that there are hydrocarbons out there," Frank Basile, manager of the DOI's 27-member Manhattan office, set up in 1973 to supervise leasing for and development of oil drilling in the mid and north Atlantic tracts, was saying of Texaco's discovery. "I'm encouraged."

It would take additional wells, he added, to determine whether "there's enough for commercial production," but, he went on, "only one in ten wells usually come up with finds in a rank wildcat area."

Basile stressed that gas poses a far smaller environmental risk than oil when produced offshore. "If there's a problem it just bubbles to the surface," he said. But gas and oil commonly run in separate stratas in the same field, "although not always," Basile said.

Onshore activity along the Atlantic in anticipation of success in the operations has stepped up, while deep concern remains over the threat oil spills pose to beaches, wetlands, marine life and the region's extensive marine and resort industries.

The failure to contain the oil spilled by the *Argo Merchant* last year off Nantucket, when 7.5 million gallons of oil gushed



Oil exploration, on offshore Atlantic rigs like this, is a booming business.

Cameraworks

The Atlantic Coast is a unique collection of back bays and barrier beaches, estuaries and fragile wetlands, the spawning grounds for marine life. It can absorb spilled oil like a sop rag.

into the sea, underscores the difficulty of cleaning up spills. Despite slick advertising of oil companies, booms—or curtains used in attempts to contain spilled oil—won't work in high Atlantic seas.

John V.N. Klein, the executive of Suffolk County, which with 1.3 million people comprises the eastern portion of Long Island, said after the disaster, "For years the oil industry claimed that the likelihood of an offshore well blow-out was nil. Then we had the North Sea disaster. And for years they claimed a spill was containable; then we had the *Argo Merchant* sending millions of gallons into the Atlantic and they couldn't contain it. So here you have it: the likelihood of blow-outs sending oil onto our waters, and no way to contain the spills."

Absorbing oil like a sponge.

Said the President's Council on Environmental Quality in 1974: "A major spill along the beaches of Cape Cod, Long Island or the Middle or South Atlantic states

could devastate the areas affected, the Atlantic is a hostile environment for oil and gas operations. Storm and seismic conditions may be more severe than in either the North Sea or the Gulf of Mexico. Recreational industries could be hurt, especially where the character of the communities is one of isolation, historic preservation or natural beauty. Outer continental shelf oil and gas production will result in onshore development of huge refineries, petrochemical complexes, gas processing facilities.

The Atlantic Coast is made up of a unique collection of back bays and barrier beaches, estuaries and miles upon miles of fragile wetlands, the spawning and feeding grounds for the Atlantic chain of marine life. It's a "soft" coast that can absorb spilled oil like a sop rag. And there's no way to clean oil from wetlands, no way to get it off the bottoms of bays that are the nation's major sources of shellfish.

The Interior's Environmental Impact

Statement projects 6 percent possibility of spilled oil on the Atlantic hitting shore and speaks of "oil spills, chronic and acute." Indeed, the DOI has recorded 5,587 spills totalling 51,421 barrels in fields in the Gulf of Mexico between 1971 and 1975.

The EIS report warns that "the adverse effects on commercial fisheries that will be encountered" will include "smothering of shellfish.... Finfish and shellfish will suffer mortality from oil spills and flavor may change because of tainting."

"When oil is spilled into the environment we lose control over it," warned the late Dr. Blumer, of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. Countermeasures are "effective only if all the oil is recovered immediately after the spill. The technology to achieve this goal does not exist."

There are jobs down there.

But to Craig Baker, a young man from Buffalo looking for work as an underwater welder, what's most important is a "job offshore," he said before gurgling down in a hard hat outfit at the Coastal Diving Academy on Long Island.

It's been a boom business at the school in the past few years, an effect "of oil exploration here off our coast," according to its director, Bob Shourot. Shourot has been under oil rigs off Norway, in the Gulf and off California, and been in the middle of several major spills, looking for the source. "I've worked spills all over," he said, noting that "oil in the marine environment is a very lethal thing in large quantities. It's absolutely devastating to the marine life, animals that are light and live on and fly over the water and animals that live in it, under it." But he's convinced that offshore drilling can be conducted with a "minimum" of hazards. Meanwhile, unions including the Operating Engineers and Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers are sending people to his school.

Rep. William J. Hughes of New Jersey, at a hearing in late June in Atlantic City on Interior's planned new leasing of mid-Atlantic ocean bottom, questioned whether the government's "accelerated" offshore "leasing, at a feverish pace, is really going to bring new resources on line, or are we simply increasing the real estate portfolios of the oil industry."

"On the West Coast," he declared, "our efforts to accelerate development have resulted in an oil glut. Although we are in the midst of an energy crisis, and we have a staggering balance of trade deficit due to oil imports, we have just approved a plan to export millions of barrels of fuel to Japan. It just doesn't make sense."

How much is out there off the Atlantic Coast, anyway? The U.S. Geological Survey has calculated "undiscovered recoverable resources" of petroleum in the Atlantic at 10-20 billion barrels, with gas 55 to 110 trillion cubic feet. Mobil Oil has put the figures at six billion barrels of oil, 31 trillion feet of gas.

"If we accept the high estimates, the oil reserves would last the U.S. three years at most.... If we accept Mobil's lower figure, the Atlantic Shelf reserves would provide us with somewhat less than one year's supply," testified Lorna Salzman, mid-Atlantic representative of Friends of the Earth, at an Interior hearing on Atlantic oil drilling. "We are being asked to possibly sacrifice the entire marine-based economy of the East Coast—its commercial and sports fishing industries, shellfishing, recreation and tourism, and all the spin-off industries—to provide fuel for one year, most of which will go out the exhaust pipes of Detroit guzzlers. One could hardly find a more depressing example of misplaced priorities."

Karl Grossman was for 13 years the environmental reporter for the Long Island Press.

ELECTIONS

Briggs brings Bryant to California

By Larry Remer

SAN DIEGO

AS THE LIMOUSINE PULLED into view, the crowd of demonstrators who'd gathered at the entrance to San Diego's Town and Country Hotel began shouting and jeering.

"Two, four, six, three. Welcome the queers from USCIB!"

"This twice as good as straight!"

"I wouldn't want Briggs teaching my children!"

The car pulls up and John Briggs, the lock-jawed, crew-cut state senator from Orange County, steps out.

Suddenly, a slender young man wearing nail polish and an earring breaks through the line of hotel security to confront Briggs face-to-face. The protestor is immediately arrested, but not before exchanging epithets with Briggs.

Three gays were arrested in the confrontation between Briggs and gays who oppose his anti-gay initiative that is on the November ballot. Briggs' personal crusade against gays—inspired by fundamentalist religion and fueled by conservative dollars—has become one of the hottest issues in the upcoming November election here in California.

Called the Briggs Initiative after its author, and listed as Proposition 6, the measure Briggs has placed on the ballot would require school boards to fire any educational employee, gay or straight, who publicly supported the right of people to engage in homosexual activity.

In a California version of Anita Bryant's successful Florida campaign, the proponents of Prop. 6 have argued in a fund-raising letter written by the Butcher-Ford agency—the same agency that ran the Prop. 13 tax cut campaign—that since the rest of the country looks to California for everything from hair styles to tax reform, we're going to show them that morality is back in style.

Ever since Anita Bryant spearheaded efforts to overturn legislation protecting gay rights in Dade County, Florida, similar campaigns have been instigated by the self-styled guardians of community morals in dozens of American cities. And—in every case—gay rights activists have been dealt crushing defeats—in Wichita, Kan., St. Paul, Minn., and Eugene, Ore.

While it appears that Prop. 6 has an excellent chance of passing in California, the gay community and its allies are determined to reverse the trend. The No on 6 Committee plans to mount a formidable media and grass roots effort, but they will have to contend with a formidable array of forces.

The church gets into the act.

Briggs, who claims to have had a personal experience with Jesus Christ, has been in the forefront of anti-gay efforts since he served as a volunteer in Anita Bryant's Dade County crusade.

The more than 1000 evangelical and fundamentalist churches in California form the backbone of his support. Their parishioners believe that homosexuality runs contrary to the teachings of the Bible. Churches and church members have contributed money and have organized political support for the Briggs Initiative.

Not since the '50s have church groups—including the Catholic church and organized Protestant denominations—been powerful enough to challenge legislative efforts to liberalize gambling, divorce, abortion, or sex statutes.

California's many small fundamentalist and evangelical churches, located primarily in rural areas, have long formed the backbone of the state's right-wing anti-communist movements. They are the people who support the anti-gun control, liberty lobby, anti-FERA and anti-abortion movements. And, in the leadership of the anti-gay movement, they have declared that passage of Prop. 6 is as vital to the moral fiber of society as the Ten Commandments.



(L. to R.) State Sen. John Briggs, moderator Ed Skoog, and S.F. Supervisor Harvey Milk debate Briggs' anti-gay proposition.

Briggs' initiative, Prop. 6, would prohibit teachers from drinking in a gay bar or having gay friends.

To counter this impression in the public mind, the anti-6 forces have lined up an impressive array of mainstream churches like the United Church of Christ and the United Presbyterian Church to oppose 6.

The right wing constituency.

John Briggs stands at the nexus of several other components of organized far right power. Hailing from Orange County, he hoped to parlay it all into a bid for governor.

Last year, Briggs entered the Republican gubernatorial primary with strong backing from several Orange County businessmen, including Carl Krushe, who owns the Carl's Jr. hamburger chain. Krushe has since been targeted by gay groups for picketing and a boycott.

To buttress his name identification, Briggs started two petition drives to qualify measures for the ballot. The first was the anti-homosexuality measure, the second, a measure that expanded the number of crimes that would carry the death penalty in California, is Prop. 7 on the November ballot.

Through a committee called Californians to Defend Our Children, Briggs spent \$1 million to hire a professional campaign firm to collect signatures at a rate of 50¢ per signature. He generated the money for the campaign by utilizing a sophisticated computer direct mail list for soliciting right-wing sympathizers nationwide.

Though Briggs dropped out of the governor's race a few weeks before the June primary when the polls showed him fourth in a field of four, his two ballot measures qualified easily. Pledging to his followers that he would finish the work he started, Briggs has promised to raise and spend \$1 million to push the anti-gay measure through. It has been reported that he plans to hit hard with a media blitz in the last three weeks featuring shots of the boys who were killed in Houston by homosexual Dean Allen Corill and photos of victims of California's homosexual trash bag murders being dug up. Next to that, statistics showing that there is no correlation between sexual preference and murder seem to pale.

The wording of the Briggs Initiative is extremely vague. Under it, teachers could

lose their jobs for simply telling their students that Spartan Greece was a gay culture. It could effectively prohibit teachers from having a drink in a gay bar, having any gay friends, assigning books by gay authors, belonging to social clubs that include gay members, or even working to defeat the initiative.

As a consequence, people are scared. David Mixner, chairperson of the No on 6 campaign, reports receiving "a lot" of \$49 contributions from people who don't want to report to the Fair Political Practices Commission donations of \$50 or more, and don't want to be identified as opposing the initiative. On several occasions, when media have shown up to cover a No on 6 event, sizeable numbers of people in attendance either have refused to give their name or walked away from the camera. Privately many gay leaders fear that apathy and fear are hurting gay efforts.

The anti-Briggs coalition.

Because of the Briggs measure's potential for abuse, the No on 6 campaign has attracted the support of nearly the entire liberal establishment. The ACLU has condemned the initiative as a violation of the First Amendment. The California Teachers Association and the state AFL-CIO oppose 6 because of the potential impact on member workers. The gay strategy is to build the broadest possible coalition against 6, drawing in as many mainstream political figures and organizations as possible. They have corralled endorsements from Gov. Brown, Sen. Cranston, the L.A. City Council, San Diego mayor Pete Wilson, the Young Republicans, and a handful of Hollywood figures—Shirley MacLaine, Paul Newman, and Natalie Wood.

The No on 6 Committee is planning to match Briggs' media blitz with a \$1 million campaign of their own. The theme of TV commercials that are slated to be shot soon is, "It's Not Just Dumb—It's Dangerous," keying on the potential abuses that passage of the initiative could trigger.

In San Francisco, where the Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club and other gay organizations have played a pivotal role in local politics for almost a decade, a broad-based effort is being mounted. Led

by Harvey Milk, an openly gay member of the Board of Supervisors, the San Francisco campaign encompasses nearly every progressive minority and labor group in the city.

In Los Angeles, like San Francisco, the anti-Briggs effort is built around gay professionals and gay bars and night spots. The gay Municipal Election Committee of Los Angeles (MECLA) has given donations to local candidates in the past. Together with New Age (New Alliance for Gay Equality), this is the backbone of the L.A. drive.

In San Diego, the pivot for No on 6 efforts is the Save Our Teachers Organization that, together with the San Diego Democratic Club, forms the basis for the local gay movement.

It could go either way.

Though the No on 6 forces are fighting an uphill battle, recent polls put the outcome of the election in doubt. The prestigious Field poll and a poll commissioned by CBS both showed Prop. 6 winning handily. But an L.A. Times poll and one by the Sacramento Bee give the No on 6 forces a small, but solid edge.

"California voters seem to be looking at 6 differently than drives to repeal Human Rights legislation," notes Sallie Fiske of No on 6. "There, the drive was to repeal special privileges afforded to gays. But the Briggs measure would single out a group and take away their existing constitutional rights. Too many people can see that and are saying, 'If they can do that to gays, blacks or Chicanos or Lutherans might be next.'"

"But you can't look at the race in conventional political terms," she continued. "Homosexuality is the last great taboo. And our poll data indicate a strange skewing of the electorate. Men, for example, seem more inclined to vote against us than women. Apparently men feel more threatened by it."

Win or lose, the gay movement has come of age in California. "We won't be gone on Nov. 8 if Briggs wins," declares Bob Lynn of the San Diego Democratic Club. "Gays all over California have been politicized by this, and win or lose, will keep on working."

Larry Remer is a correspondent for IN THESE TIMES in California.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Award brings home human rights

By Christy Macy

WASHINGTON

AN INSPIRATIONAL TRIBUTE to the memory of Chilean patriot Orlando Letelier and his co-worker Ronni Karpen Moffitt was held here in Washington last week, on the second anniversary of their murders. "There is an absolute link," said Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA) to a crowd of over 1,000 people gathered at Howard University for the event, "between efforts for liberation in the Third World and the struggle for liberation in the U.S." Explaining that unity comes from a shared analysis of who the enemy is, Dellums asked his audience, many of whom were from Washington's black and Spanish-speaking community, "Are the enemies of poor black people poor whites, or is the enemy a system that perpetuates poverty and unemployment?"

Condemning the American national security state for disrupting legitimate political activity at home and waging secret wars against Third World countries, Dellums called on the crowd to end "the stranglehold of giant corporations over our present system. We must recognize that the economic strength of this country flows from the bottom up not the top down." He concluded with the suggestion that progressives in this country begin demanding a decentralized, democratically controlled economy "where co-operation for the common good replaces institutional greed for a few."

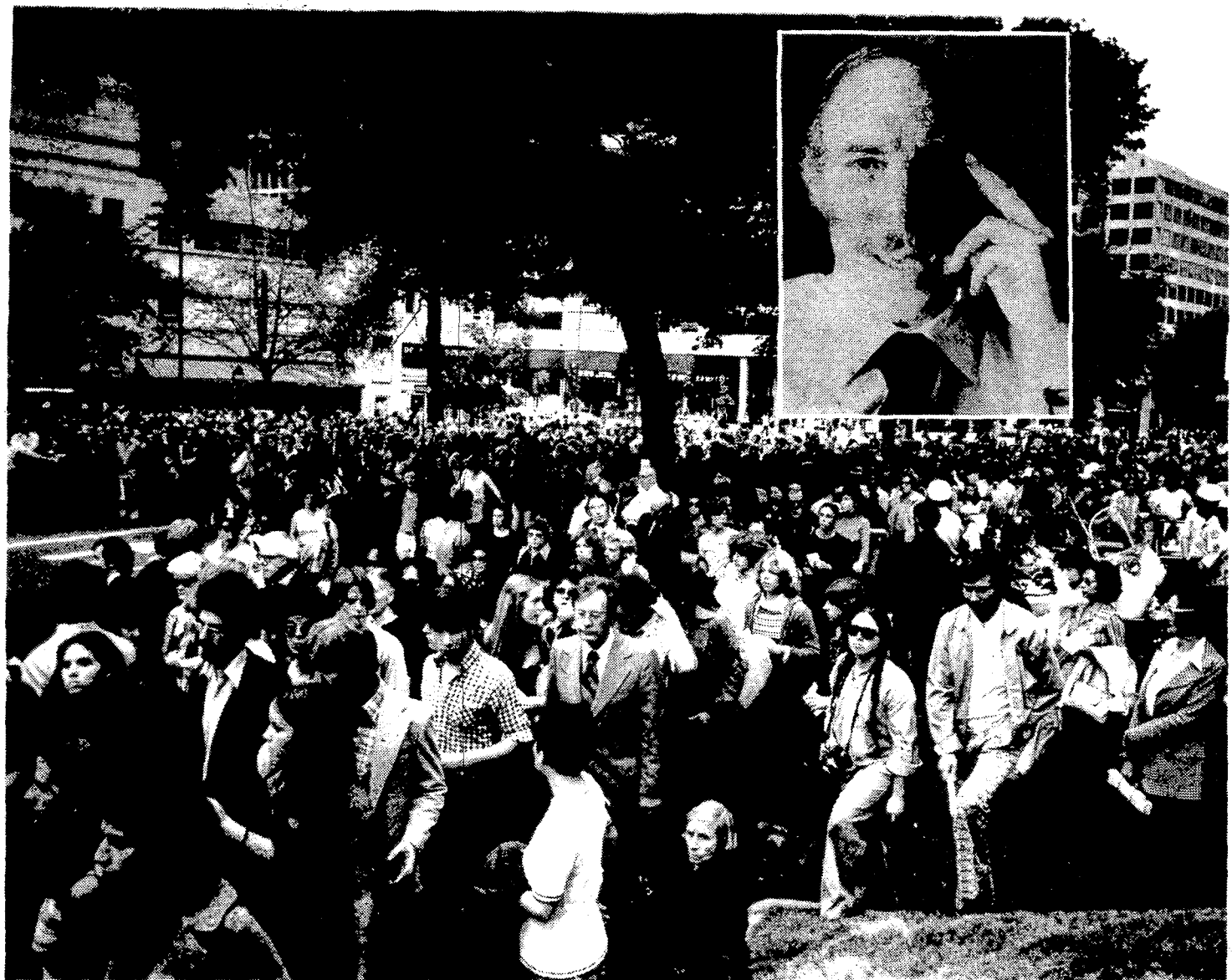
All the speakers at the event sponsored by the Institute for Policy Studies at the second Letelier-Moffitt human rights award program underlined in different ways the common bond between those working for human rights in this country and abroad.

Isabel Allende, daughter of the former president of Chile, spoke of how Orlando Letelier had taught her and all Chileans "the value of your solidarity and the support you offered to our people's struggle." Speaking in Spanish, Ms. Allende called Ms. Moffitt a "beautiful symbol to us, the one name most representative of all those many thousands of young people throughout the world who have given the best of their lives to our struggle." Calling on the Chilean military to "drive out from the honored seat of Chile's presidents the real assassin of Letelier," she proclaimed that nothing would keep the Chilean people "from continuing to forge their strength and unity, until they have created an unstoppable movement that will restore freedom and democracy."

Human rights a cold war weapon.

The audience was reminded of the great personal loss felt by those who knew and loved the two slain figures, as Orlando Letelier's widow, Isabel, presented the annual Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Award to philanthropist Samuel Rubin. "Death makes one very lonely," she said, and then went on to commend Rubin for being one of the first people immediately after the murder "whose first thought was how to rescue the living." Rubin, a distinguished white-haired Russian immigrant who became the president of Faberge Perfumes, and founded the Samuel Rubin Foundation in New York, was given the award for his work in promoting cross-cultural exchanges with Third World countries and supporting studies in world peace, such as those undertaken at the Transnational Institute, the international program of the Institute for Policy Studies.

Sharing the Human Rights Award with Rubin was Ben Chavis, civil rights leader and co-defendant in the case of the Wilmington 10. His invitation to attend the awards ceremony had already brought embarrassment to President Carter, since IPS had publicly requested the President intervene in order to allow Chavis a short leave from his prison in North Carolina, where he is serving a 34-year sentence on



Mourners attend the funeral in Washington of Orlando Letelier and Ronnie Moffitt. Their deaths have been linked to high officials within the Chilean junta. Inset: Orlando Letelier.

charges of burning a grocery store. Amnesty International has adopted Chavis and his nine co-defendants as "prisoners of conscience" in the U.S.

Michael Moffitt, husband of the slain Ronni, said bitterly that "it seems that the White House finds it easier to talk about human rights as an abstract nicety than it does to extend this gesture to one of our own, the Rev. Chavis." A tape smuggled out from Chavis' prison cell was played to a hushed audience, in which the civil rights leader denounced the Carter administration for not speaking out against the dictators in Chile, Nicaragua and Iran, but instead using the human rights issue "as a Cold War weapon against our friends in the Socialist countries." Mrs. Elizabeth Chavis, a school

teacher in North Carolina for 37 years, accepted the award for her imprisoned son.

Speaking proudly of pressure that political groups around the country were able to bring upon the Justice Department's investigation of the assassination, IPS director Robert Borosage hailed the recent indictments of top Chilean officers and Cuban hit men in the case. He then turned the finger of responsibility back toward the U.S. government, both for the CIA's involvement in the coup that placed the present junta in power in Chile, but also for the Agency's training of terrorists like the Cuban exiles, who actually placed the bomb under Letelier's car. Criticizing the Carter administration for continuing to endorse both private

and government funds to Chile, Borosage called on President Carter to honor his pledge to levy economic sanctions against countries who harbor terrorists. "We suggest," he said, that the President "begin with Chile, which harbors an internationally infamous terrorist as its head of state."

The evening concluded with the poetic, sometimes passionate songs of Angel Parra, a Chilean folksinger who spent a year in the junta's concentration camp in northern Chile. It was a fitting end to a memorial that mourned the suffering of people everywhere, but celebrated the growing sense of unity around common goals.

Christy Macy is associated with the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.

PROTESTS

Soweto students face sedition rap

By Barbara Bedway

ELEVEN BLACK STUDENTS charged with "sedition," or, alternatively, "terrorism" face the death penalty in one of the most important political trials in South Africa since the 1964 proceedings against African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela.

The students, ranging in age from 18 to 23, are members of the now-banned Soweto Students' Representatives Council (SSRC). They are being tried for their alleged roles in the 1976 Soweto rebellion, which began as a protest against the use of the Afrikaans language in the schools and led to demonstrations, rioting and clashes with police in the huge black township near Johannesburg.

The 96-page indictment against the ten men and one woman also names 11 others, now in exile, as "co-conspirators." Among them are three former presidents of the SSRC and the founder of the Black Peoples Convention, who is now secretary general of the Allied Workers Union.

Shein Chetty, the students' attorney, had only 24 hours to prepare their case.

The trials opened Sept. 18, over the objections of Shein Chetty, the students' attorney. At a preliminary hearing in July, Chetty said the September date gave him no time to prepare his case.

The attorney pointed out that he knew nothing about the case, not even the defendants' names, until 24 hours before the hearing. In addition, the South African government has forbidden Chetty's law clerk from working on the case.

The charge of sedition, which is a common-law provision in South Africa, has not been invoked by the government in 50 years. The 11 defendants may be sentenced to death if convicted of either sedition or terrorism.

No defendant convicted of terrorist activities in South Africa has ever been given the death penalty. Persons who have been tried for actions that resulted in another's death usually have been charged with murder and given death sentences on conviction of that charge.

The government's Terrorism Act, passed in 1967, has brought sentences of eight to 12 years for persons distributing pamphlets urging demonstrations, five years for a 17-year-old who wrote a letter urging his friend to get military training, and five years for organizing public rallies in support of the Mozambique liberation movement.

In New York, protestors marked the opening of the trial by picketing the South African consulate. At a morning press conference, Pan African Congress leader David Sibeko said, "We fear most that the South African government will use the trial not only to suppress the accused but to intimidate all our people by passing severe sentences. This is my experience from having lost more than 100 comrades at the gallows in Pretoria."

LABOR

McBride steels union against dissent

By Michael Gillespie

ATLANTIC CITY

UNIONISTS ORGANIZING FOR a more democratic and militant United Steelworkers of America won several victories at the union's bi-annual convention here last week despite USWA president Lloyd McBride's tight control of the proceedings and numerous physical and verbal attacks on union dissidents and left-wing "outsiders."

The oppositionists, in spite of their small numbers and poor organization at the convention, forced the union's first real debate on the "right-to-ratify" all USWA contracts and pushed forward the fight for women's rights in the union.

At the same time, pro-administration delegates, led by the union's 300 staff representatives, dominated the convention and rammed through sweeping and elaborate restrictions on union election campaign funding, measures aimed at rank-and-file challengers.

The dramatic debate on the union's contract ratification procedures, the key policy issue before the five-day gathering, demonstrated how poorly the convention reflected the sentiments of the union's 1.3 million members.

Currently, more than 500,000 union members in the basic steel, container, aluminum and nonferrous mining industries indirectly ratify their contracts through union industry conferences composed of all the local union presidents in that industry.

For three months prior to the convention, however, scores of local union resolutions were passed supporting direct membership ratifications. Five of the USWA's 25 districts held conferences backing the proposal and many of McBride's own supporters came out in favor of the "right-to-ratify" in local union elections held to choose convention delegates.

But at the convention only 316 delegates of the more than 2,800 registered stood to demand a roll call vote on the issue. The measure was referred to the various industry conferences, which will not meet until early 1980.

Recognizing the developing pro-ratification sentiments within the union, McBride conducted a formally democratic, but carefully orchestrated debate at the first convention since his bitterly fought victory over Ed Sadlowski in 1977. Not only was the union administration forced to hold a formal debate, but the ratification proposal was not killed outright, as it has been in previous years.

Jim Balanoff, District 31 director and Sadlowski's successor, and Bill Andrews, president of Local 1010 that has been the base of the ratification movement in the Chicago-Gary area, spoke for the changes in the ratification process.

Also backing the right-to-ratify as a means of strengthening the union's bargaining and political stance during the hour-long debate were Joe Samargia, a leader of the 138-day strike on the Mesabi Iron Range, and Marvin Weinstock, a candidate on Sadlowski's 1977 Steelworkers Fight Back slate.

New, younger leaders of the right-to-ratify movement in Chicago, Gary, Pittsburgh and the Iron Range have already indicated that they hope to elect local union presidents committed to membership ratification in next April's local elections. In addition to the local elections, right-to-ratify activists now have an entire schedule of events to organize around, including the industry conferences, the 1980 contract and the 1981 international union elections.

The union administration withdrew a measure that would have eliminated membership referendum elections for international officers, a proposal reportedly under serious consideration, in response to the pro-ratification sentiment.

A spirited debate also broke out about the role of women in the steel industry



Top left: A delegate speaks at the annual Steelworkers convention. Right: USWA president Lloyd McBride addresses the delegates. Bottom: Delegates view the proceedings on TV monitors.

and the union, reflecting the continuing impact of the women's movement on organized labor.

Alice Peurla, a grievor at U.S. Steel South Works in Chicago, blasted the administration for consolidating the scores of local resolutions on women's rights into an omnibus resolution that did not establish an international department of women's affairs or call an international union women's conference.

Other Chicago-Gary delegates, some members of the District 31 Women's Caucus, hit job discrimination against women in the mill, protested the lack of full maternity benefits in the contracts, and demanded the union more actively support the Equal Rights Amendment.

One indication of the growing influence of women in the union occurred when delegate John Todorich, from Local 1082 near Pittsburgh, was booed by the overwhelmingly male delegates when he warned the "girls" to "clean up their act," asserting "women want the good pay, but they don't want to do the work that men do."

Diana Kaczocha, from Local 6787 at Bethlehem Steel's Burns Harbor, Ind., plant, answered him saying, "The attitude of the brother who just spoke is the best example of why this union needs a department of women's affairs."

But while the union leadership did make some concessions to the rising sentiment for greater union democracy and women's rights, McBride pushed through new regulations designed to make funding of rank-and-file election challenges extremely difficult.

The adopted regulations, accompanied by minute and complex disclosure and re-

porting requirements, would prohibit any campaign contribution of any kind by any non-USWA member to any candidate for international and district level union office.

McBride contended the new rules were required because of the "massive contributions from outsiders," who "presumed to affect" the policies and direction of the union.

Although 25 percent of the union's International Executive Board reportedly opposed the new regulations when they were first proposed, Balanoff and Linus Wampler, District 33 director in Minnesota, were the only district directors to speak against them in the debate.

"The only thing not contained [in the rules] is that you have to get permission from the president of this union to run against him," Balanoff declared in pledging to fight the regulations.

Other delegates pointed out that incumbents, whose campaigns routinely receive large sums from the more than 1,000 union field and headquarters staffers, will be able to outspend any challenger by huge margins. In addition, the exacting disclosure and reporting requirements for all contributions over \$5 will give the administration a complete list of the opponents' supporters, what one delegate called a "built-in blacklist."

The 90-minute funding debate was the most frenzied of the convention. Balanoff and Wampler were loudly booed and almost drowned out by McBride's supporters.

The state of the union.

Although administration critics had relatively few delegates, McBride felt com-

pelled to give a lengthy, detailed "state of the union" speech defending his first year in office, particularly his close collaboration with the steel companies in their anti-import drive.

McBride acknowledged the new corporate attacks on the USWA and the increasing inability of "business unionists" to "deliver the goods." He also conceded that the much-publicized centerpiece of the 1977 basic steel contract, the "lifetime security" early retirement program, had not yet been finally agreed to by the industry more than a year after the contract was signed.

While President Carter and Labor Secretary Ray Marshall lauded his efforts in their speeches to the convention, McBride was nonetheless at a loss as to how to respond to Carter's impending anti-inflation program that is designed to freeze wages while including only modest price restraints.

McBride blamed organized labor's recent setbacks in Congress and in negotiations with business on dissent within the union and on outsiders, saying, "It [is] extremely difficult for union leaders who support our economic system to defend it when we're under constant attack from the left."

Many issues were left unresolved by the convention. While the right-to-ratify and women's rights proposals were defeated or watered down, and the election funding restrictions adopted, McBride was unable to contain the insurgent movement within the union or quell dissent over his leadership of the Steelworkers.

Michael Gillespie writes on the steelworkers and labor.

Photos courtesy Gary Hubbard/USW

LABOR AND THE STATE

Labor, black leaders confront Carter

By David Moberg

AS THE DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS and White House have capitulated to corporate and conservative pressures and abandoned more and more of their 1976 platform, there was bound to be a point when tolerance of this drift by the progressive wing of the party reached its limit. That breaking point showed, at times explosively, in three separate incidents last week.

Most dramatically, Rep. John Conyers of Michigan stomped out of a Sept. 26 Congressional Black Caucus meeting with President Carter and Vice-President Mondale after they rebuked him for demanding a summit conference of key political figures to win passage of the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment bill before Congress adjourns this fall.

William Winpisinger, president of the million-member Machinists union, the nation's fifth largest, had announced just the day before that neither Carter nor a long list of liberal Senators merited the union's support any longer because of their approval of natural gas deregulation and because of administration failures to enact full employment legislation, strong occupational safety and health standards, national health insurance and other Democratic goals.

Following up on his earlier denunciation of the capitalists' "class warfare" and the politicians' capitulation that had scuttled labor law reform, Douglas Fraser, president of the United Auto Workers, the second largest union, invited representatives of over 100 groups from the "progressive community" to an Oct. 17 meeting in Detroit to discuss how to make elected Democratic officials more accountable to their supporters.

At this point Conyers, Fraser and Winpisinger are simply trying to force Carter and other Democrats to live up to their own promises, but their actions also signal a decision by left forces within the Democratic party that they must become more autonomous and outspoken if they are to halt the rightward trend. The three blasts last week can be seen as part of an opening salvo in a battle that over the next two years will determine Carter's fate and, in the long run, possibly reshape or even split the Democratic party if the confrontation is pressed forward vigorously.

When Carter rejected Conyers' repeated demand to demonstrate the importance of Humphrey-Hawkins and to break up the Senate logjam on the bill by calling a Camp David summit of principal people involved, Conyers warned that Carter would be blamed if the bill died. Mondale and Carter—never a firm supporter of full employment legislation—angrily



Black leaders have pressed for an unemployment bill like Humphrey-Hawkins.

Conyers, Frazer and Winpisinger are trying to force Carter and other Dems to live up to their promises and halt the rightward trend.

rejected that assessment, blaming instead the Republicans, questioning Conyers' loyalty to the President and the party and suggesting that he was alone in his opinion. In protest of Carter's "hoodwinking" the Caucus, Conyers stalked out.

The action had a constructive effect. Within a couple of days nearly all of the remaining Caucus members had come to share Conyers' assessment that the barrier to scheduling a vote on the bill before Senate adjournment on Oct. 14 was above all inaction by the White House. In itself

this was a sign of new independence for the Caucus.

Embarrassed by the walkout and anticipating a speech before over 7,000 black politicians arriving Saturday, Sept. 30, for the 8th annual Congressional Black Caucus weekend, Carter shifted gears and arranged by Thursday evening to have Humphrey-Hawkins put on the agenda for this session. Although a date must still be set in consultation with Republican leaders, the nearly dead bill was revived again. It still faces still opposition

in the Senate, including amendments such as the crippling one from the Banking committee that would link the bill's 4 percent adult unemployment goal for 1983 to achievement of zero inflation.

Winpisinger attacks gas stand.

Winpisinger shared Conyers' anger about the deadly delay of full employment, but he was most irate at Carter's decision to back natural gas price deregulation and at the capitulation of many liberal Senators who were once supported by the Machinists to White House pressure.

"We will no longer contribute to our own demise—pay for votes against us," Winpisinger said in a letter to Carter. "We will withdraw this support, even if it means isolation and defeat for some of our spotted friends, not to mention the wolves in sheep's clothing. There are alternatives."

Immediately the Machinists cut off support for at least ten Senators who voted for the "compromise" gas bill: Dick Clark (Iowa), William Hathaway (Maine), John Glenn (Ohio), John Culver (Iowa), Alan Cranston (California), Warren Magnuson (Washington), John Melcher (Montana) and—the only Republican—Jacob Javits (New York).

Fraser's anger, provoked by the failure of labor law reform due to corporate lobbying and Democratic defections, is aimed primarily at what Winpisinger denounced as the "fickleness and irresolution" of many Democrats. The principal goal of the one-day conference Fraser called of delegates from labor, civil rights, religious, women's and other organizations is to establish greater discipline within the elected ranks of the Democratic Party. His model, a UAW staff person said, was the mildly socialist New Democratic Party of Canada. Representatives who break with party discipline on major issues—such as labor law reform or full employment—would be denied money, campaign aid, choice appointments or even membership in the party. Also, Fraser hopes that the new group's Political Reform Commission will fight to eliminate the filibuster and to make voting and registration easier.

Fraser hopes to make "the Democratic Party in fact what in principle it has proclaimed itself to be since the New Deal—a progressive party struggling against the reactionary capitalist money power of the Republicans to transform America into a fair and decent society."

Some people might argue that the Democratic Party has never been quite that glorious in principle, let alone in fact, but more action of the sort taken last week by Conyers, Fraser and Winpisinger might eventually contribute to realizing Fraser's stated goal—"a genuinely progressive people's party."

LAW AND THE COURTS

Weber case to test private affirmative action

By Ron Williams

AS ALLAN BAKKE CONCLUDED his first week of classes at the University of California at Davis Medical School, another reverse discrimination suit, with major consequences for affirmative action employment programs, reached the Supreme Court.

In April 1974, Brian Weber, a 31-year-old lab analyst at Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation's Gramercy, La., operation, applied for a crafts-retraining program. For Weber, who had ten years service at Kaiser, the retraining program would mean better hours, greater job security and a doubling of salary. But Brian Weber was rejected.

Earlier in 1974, Kaiser Aluminum and the United Steelworkers of America (US-

WA) had negotiated an affirmative action plan to channel minorities and women into higher paying skilled-crafts jobs. The retraining program that emerged required at least one minority or female employee to be accepted for every white male. Acceptance into the program, which had previously been determined by prior

What the Bakke case did to higher education the Weber case can do to private corporations.

experience or seniority, was now distinctly split into two categories. Minorities and women, who actually held less seniority or were less experienced than their white counterparts, were accepted.

Weber reasoned that because he is white, the affirmative action requirements prevented him from the place in the pro-

gram he rightfully deserved. So he sued Kaiser and the Steelworkers. He brought the suit under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which bans discrimination in employment because of race or sex. Weber's claim of reverse discrimination has been upheld in federal district court in New Orleans and in the Fifth Circuit

Court of Appeals—both courts ruling the Kaiser/Steelworkers program illegal.

When the Supreme Court begins its new term Oct. 2, it will decide whether to hear Kaiser's appeal or decline to review the case. If it declines, the lower courts' ruling against the program will stand, but observers speculate that the

national standard set would be limited. If the Supreme Court reviews the case and upholds the two lower courts, all voluntary affirmative action plans similar to Kaiser's will become illegal.

Private affirmative action.

In the Bakke decision, the court ruled that race may be a factor in admissions, but a two-track system in which whites are unable to compete in one of those tracks, is illegal. In the majority opinion, however, a number of previous cases involving "official finding" of past discrimination were cited as instances where "racial preferences" were upheld. The Bakke opinion seemed to imply that only in cases of such official finding of past illegal actions will affirmative action plans be upheld in court. The voluntary

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IN THE WORLD

EUROPE

Socialists threaten to open old wounds on the Italian left

By Diana Johnstone

R O M E

THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY (PSI) has long suffered from identity problems. Occupying an uncertain terrain between the big Communist party (PCI) and the tiny Social Democratic party (PSDI), the PSI in recent elections has won about 10 percent of the vote. From its aged leaders belonging to the generation that fought against fascism—exemplified by the recently elected President of the Republic, Sandro Pertini—the party has inherited more an aura of integrity and commitment than a program or even a philosophy. But a new generation of leaders has taken control of the party apparently determined to spend that heritage in setting up a dynamic new enterprise.

This summer, the PSI's portly young secretary general, Bettino Craxi, launched an ideological offensive against the PCI designed to give the PSI a new identity and role in Italian—and European—politics. This deliberately staged campaign will intensify throughout the autumn, and, if successful, could split the Italian left as badly as the French Communist party's campaign against the Socialists split the French left last year.

The "historic compromise" between the PCI and the ruling Christian Democrats (DC) has been repeatedly attacked from the left and from the right. But Craxi's attack from the center could prove the most deadly. The PSI, which under former secretary general Francesco De Martino was the bridge bringing the PCI and DC together, under Craxi is being turned into the wedge to drive them apart.

Support for historic compromise.

In a major interview in *La Repubblica* last Aug. 2, PCI secretary general Enrico Berlinguer briefly defined the "historic compromise" as a "joint responsibility" among Italy's democratic political parties (communist, socialist, Catholic and anticlerical or "laic"), "national solidarity, efforts at mutual understanding and above all a common commitment to transform the country."

Whatever else one can say about it, this policy very evidently stems from a longstanding abandonment of the prospect of pulling off an Italian version of the 1917 Russian revolution and from determination on the part of the PCI leadership to save Italy's constitutional democratic system from its own dangerous stagnation.

This stagnation has often been attributed to the impossibility of alternation of power, due to the Cold War "ideological disqualification" of the main opposition party, the PCI, from government, thus making the DC a permanent ruling party, with all the incompetence, corruption and immobilism that implies.

Following this line of reasoning, health could be restored to the Italian democratic process only by admitting the PCI into national government coalitions, removing the stigma attached to the PCI and thus enabling it to offer (presumably in coalition with the PSI, as in many local governments) a realistic alternative to DC government.

In 1976, this seemed to be the general strategic approach of the PSI under De

The new Socialists claim that the Communists cannot participate in a democratic regime.

Martino, which by withdrawing support for the DC government precipitated the elections that brought the PCI to its greatest parliamentary strength in history (over 34 percent). But the PSI did poorly in the June 1976 elections, and De Martino was rapidly replaced by Craxi.

Socialists get PCI stigma.

Since then, despite its extremely accommodating attitude, the PCI has been kept out of the national government. But the "ideological disqualification" argument has been gradually abandoned by all but a marginal right wing of the DC—and by the U.S. Its participation in government vetoed by Washington, the PCI has been given equal consultative status with the PSI, the Republicans and the Social Democrats in a coalition that supports the DC government of Giulio Andreotti without actually sharing in it.

A little-remarked aspect of this curious arrangement is that the necessary equality between the consulting parties means they are all infected by the PCI's stigma: so long as the PCI is kept out of cabinet posts, all are kept out. Faced with this impasse, some Socialists may be getting restless.

Over the past couple of years, Socialists have generally criticized the historic compromise from the left, that is, on the grounds that the PCI should give higher priority to unity with the left (in practice, with the PSI) than to making concessions to the DC. Some Socialist criticism has increasingly converged with sectors of the far left who fear that a DC-PCI coalition, abolishing all prospect of alternation, would be the instrument of a "Germanization" of Italy, abolishing all political opposition.

Fear of "Germany" has blended with fear of "the gulag" (both mystified out of their historical, cultural or sociological context) to create an ambiguous cult of "dissent" and "dissidents" that is the source of a new anti-communism appealing to the 1968 generation who learned to despise Communist parties for not being sufficiently revolutionary or spontaneous.

As the anti-PCI campaign got underway this summer, the PSI's Craxian leadership continued to claim that its objective was a unified left alternative to the DC. But its actions indicate a very different strategy.

Giving up Leninism.

In one municipality after another ruled by PCI-PSI coalitions, Craxi's followers are coming up with more or less vague pretexts to quarrel with their partners and endanger the coalition. In Venice, for instance, the Craxi people have set off a crisis by demanding to replace the Socialist mayor, Mario Rigo, who was elected by PSI and PCI city council members and who does not want to quit.

Craxi has denied that the rash of local quarrels with the PCI means the PSI has



Bettino Craxi, the secretary general of the Socialist party. Upper left (from right to left): Claudio Signorile, deputy secretary and ally of Craxi; Sandro Pertini, Italian president and prominent oldtime Socialist; Francesco de Martino, former secretary general, who fostered unity with the Communists.

dropped its united left policy for a return to eventual center-left coalition with the DC. Instead, Craxi has attributed the disputes to Socialist "flexibility" and the laudable "autonomy" of local PSI branches. This is not very convincing.

Current PSI behavior seems aimed at accumulating a large number of varied instances showing that Communists and Socialists just can't get along. This can set the stage for a later, ostensibly separate step by which the PSI, having no other choice, can decently return to coalition with the DC.

For while still claiming to be to the left of the PCI by favoring a left coalition over the "historic compromise," Craxi's ideological offensive aims at making both impossible by reviving and endorsing the old argument that the PCI is "ideologically disqualified" from taking part in democratic government.

The opening shots in the ideological campaign were fired in a July 28 interview with Craxi's right-hand man, PSI deputy secretary Claudio Signorile, who said that the PCI had not yet clearly enough repudiated its Leninist origins to take part in Western democratic government. Signorile cleverly maintained that the historic compromise was a sign of the PCI's failure to give up Leninism altogether for democracy, since "a left-wing party attached to the Leninist pattern can express its own identity as a governing force only in a national front strategy in which the moderate components of society are also present."

A PCI not yet cured of Leninism could not, however, take part in a left-wing government. Thus, Signorile argued, the PSI, whose objective is a left-wing government,

has a right and duty to demand that the PCI prove that it has completely changed.

Berlinguer accused of hard line.

This argument switched the terms of the usual PCI apology for the historic compromise, to the effect that special Italian circumstances (the weight of Catholicism, notably) and international conditions rule out a left-wing government in Italy (see Chile, 1973), and instead blamed the situation on the nature of the PCI. Signorile thus managed to take the official American position while ostensibly seeking to promote a left-wing coalition with the PCI.

As aspiring partner, the PSI thus claims the right to correct the PCI's faults. These faults seem apt to grow in number under the scrutiny of the Craxians. For instance, Signorile implied that the Gramscian concept of "hegemony" was contrary to pluralist democracy.

A few days later, on Aug. 2, Berlinguer was in turn interviewed by *La Repubblica*. Political commentators and the leaders of almost all other parties, as well as the De Martino wing of the PSI, read the Berlinguer interview as essentially conciliatory and marking an important step in the open abandonment of Leninism.

But where everyone else saw Berlinguer's cautious statements as part of a movement away from Leninism, the Craxians reacted as if they were moves toward Leninism. Accusing Berlinguer of having chosen the "hard line" of Georges Marchais' French Communist party, the Craxians took the interview as an "attack" and an occasion to escalate the ideological war.

(To be continued.)

SOUTH AMERICA

Peru: case history of a revolution that's gone awry

By Gerard Colby

FIVE MILLION PERUVIANS WENT to the polls on June 18 in the first nationwide election in 11 years of military rule, and the returns reflected the mood of a country in crisis. The social democratic APRA party—the Popular Revolutionary Alliance—won 36 percent of the ballots as the centrist mediator between the parties of the left, which scored 27 percent, and those of the right, which took 38 percent.

The Peruvian regime decided to hold elections when Lima's militant working population took to the streets in opposition to austerity policies that the Western banking community had demanded. The junta's leaders saw elections to a constituent assembly as a way out of a governing crisis it could no longer contain.

But the military's attempt to improve its image did not prevent it from arresting and deporting the major left candidates. Nor did that repression, a hallmark of the current regime of Gen. Francisco Morales Bermudez, prevent hundreds of thousands of Peruvian workers and peasants from voting for those candidates anyway. For they knew, while most of the world only suspected, that the 1968 "Revolt of the Colonels" had ended and that a right-wing coup had already taken place in Peru, quickly, quietly and effectively.

Unholy alliance.

In August 1975 Gen. Juan Velasco Alvarado, the nationalist president, was forced out of office by a coalition of rightist generals and admirals of the army, air force and navy.

Velasco was the leader of the revolution since it began in 1968, when the armed forces stepped in before the elections and seized the presidential palace to thwart the almost certain victory of the reformist social democratic *Partido Aprista Peruano* (PAP) of Victor Raul Haya de la Torre, founder of APRA.

The oldest conservative generals in the army, tied by kinship and friendship to the large rural landowners, opposed the PAP because in its earlier years it had militantly displayed a radical nationalism and anti-militarism. The younger officers, who prepared the coup, opposed the PAP because it had since sold out to the landed oligarchy.

What ensued was an uncomfortable alliance between the young army colonels, who were mostly from Indian campesino backgrounds, and the more aristocratic air force and navy officers from the white, conservative upper class, the sons of industrialists and bankers. The result of this alliance was the 1968 coup that put the armed forces, led by Gen. Velasco, in power.

This unholy alliance endured as long as the Velasco government was able to carry out measures that seemed to move Peru toward economic independence while preserving and building Peruvian capitalism. Economic independence for such an "underdeveloped" country, however, meant carrying out the thorough land reform demanded by the restless peasantry and introducing capitalist farming throughout the countryside.

To accomplish this, Velasco had to remove the greatest obstacles to independent Peruvian industrialization: the landed oligarchy who were tied to foreign, mostly U.S., markets and banks, and U.S. companies that controlled oil, mining and large corporate farms.

For this purpose Velasco mobilized the peasant population and successfully enticed leftists who, either because they hoped the mobilization would get out of

hand and lead to a people's revolution or because they believed that Peru must go through a capitalist revolution to develop the industrial and working class concentration for a future socialist revolution, joined the regime's new centralized organization, SINAMOS, *Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Mobilizacion Social* (National System of Support to the Social Mobilization).

Velasco's goal was to create a middle class of rich peasants who would take over the great estates of the oligarchs and foreign agribusinesses and become exclusively cash-croppers dependent on the regime's purchasing power and regulatory agencies, thereby providing a controlled rural base of loyalty for the existing government.

Vicious cycle.

While the agrarian reform did turn over to peasants more than 80 percent of the country's arable land—some 20 million acres—only 10 to 15 percent of the campesino population actually benefitted from the advanced machinery of the giant foreign-owned farms that were collectivized. The great mass of the population remained impoverished, unaided, and increasingly desperate. With their small plots of land these peasants were unable to generate a return on their labor sufficient to meet their basic living needs. The giant estates, meanwhile, undersold them and forced down the prices of all agricultural products.

Tragically, the peasants' attempt to compensate for the drop in market values by increasing output and the volume of products only maintained the vicious cycle of overproduction, lower prices and diminishing income that plagued the peasant-based agricultural sector: a glutted marketplace where food is heaped in mounds in village squares in front of hungry people who haven't enough money to buy the necessities for a healthy life.

The really rural poor began to move in great waves of migration out of the Andean highlands toward the western coast or the eastern jungles of the Amazon basin in the interior. In the coastal cities, they lived as a chronically unemployed *lumpenproletariat* in the vast slums surrounding the center city's opulent skyscrapers. Since 1968, rural migration has doubled the population of Lima alone.

The oil solution fails.

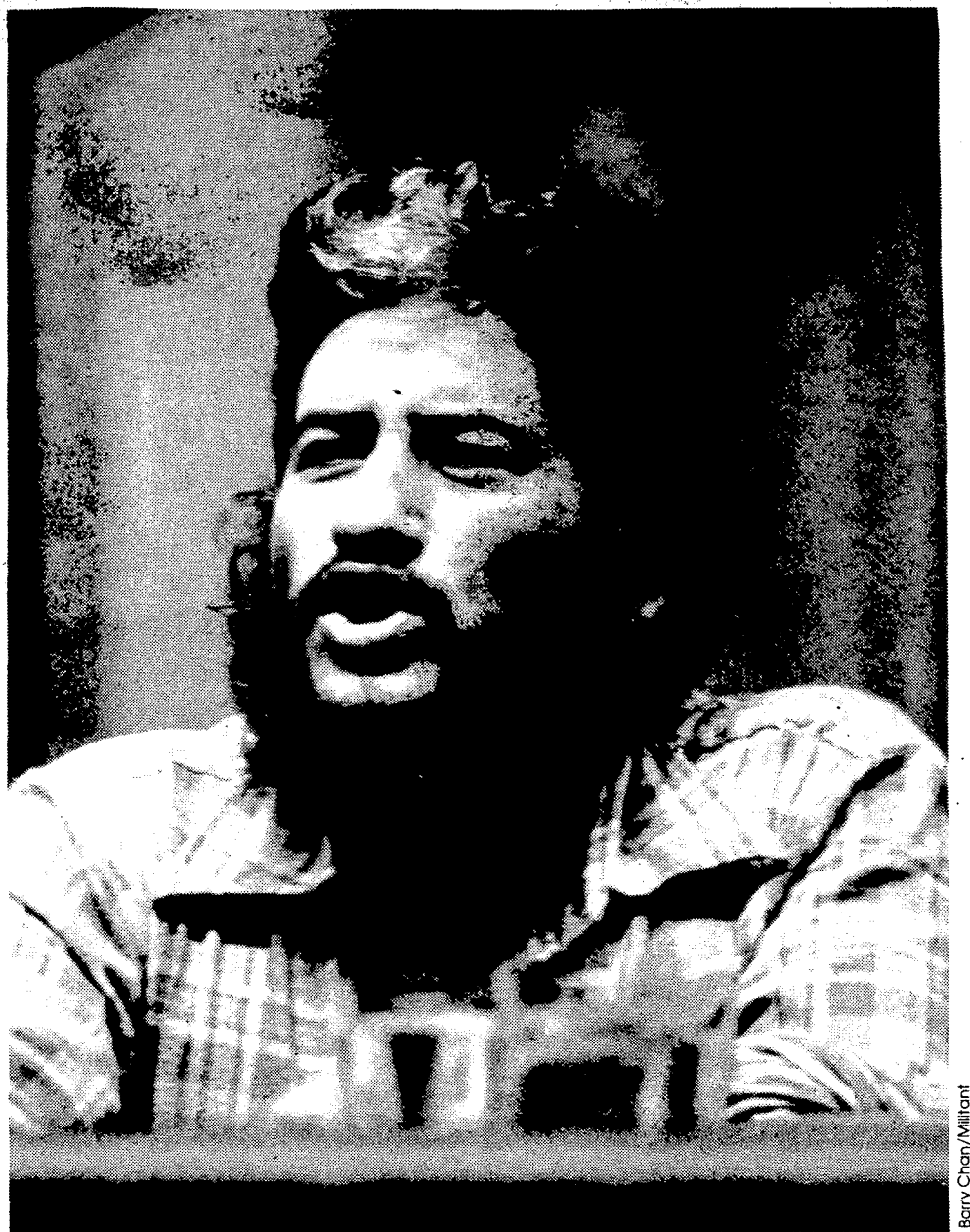
Who, it has been asked in Peru, could put these people to work? Industry, of course, is the common answer. But industrialization still takes capital—something Peru doesn't have.

For a while oil seemed to be the answer. The discovery and exploitation of oil in commercially exploitable quantities along the north and particularly the new finds in the Amazon raised hopes among Lima powerbrokers of an alternative to stagnation and revolution.

But when most of the ten or so American oil companies, after large investments, suddenly announced there was no oil and departed, Velasco was left with a pipeline that cost his government \$1 billion and funnelled only half the Amazonian oil it had been designed to carry.

When the anchovy schools mysteriously disappeared off the Peruvian coast, effectively crippling the recently nationalized fishing industry, and the price of copper suddenly fell on the world market, the financial situation became desperate.

With U.S. military aid suspended, threatening the Peruvian military's storehouses, and U.S. pressure keeping the World Bank and International Monetary Fund



Peasant leader Hugo Blanco was elected to the assembly IN ABSENTIA.

Recent elections have been mere window dressing. In 1975, a coup took place that drove Peru sharply and steadily rightward.

from delivering on pledged loans, Velasco's government soon found itself foundering in a financial and ultimately political storm.

Drift to the right.

In August 1975, Velasco was finally forced to resign. A more conservative general, Francisco Morales Bermudez, took the helm and immediately brought into the cabinet more conservative air force and navy officers. Since then, Peru's domestic and foreign policies have drifted slowly to the right.

Striking labor and peasant leaders have been arrested and imprisoned without trial or civil rights. The SINAMOS has been used to control rather than inspire mass mobilizations and organizations, and the military junta has dropped the earlier "socialist" description of its revolution, substituting "humanist."

Bermudez reopened friendly talks with the fascist regimes in Chile, Argentina and Brazil.

On June 20 the Peruvian *sole* was devalued from 45 to 65 per U.S. dollar, and on June 30 austerity measures were introduced, increasing electric and telephone rates, raising taxes, reducing budget spending, restricting foreign exchange and imports, and—worst of all—suspending the workers' right to collective bargaining for six months.

After demonstrations broke out across the country in protest, Morales Bermudez declared a national state of emergency.

This growing discontent was behind the regime's subsequent decision on July 12 to arrest, interrogate, and exile Trotskyist peasant leader Hugo Blanco. On July 14, the regime prohibited all strikes and required prior approval of all gatherings, including union or political meetings.

General strike.

The response of the left was weak at first. The Communist party, which has won leadership in the national labor federa-

tion, the CGTP, abandoned its usual defense of the regime and offered its first substantial criticism. In late November 1976, three previous leaders in the military regime of Velasco signed the manifesto of a new party, the *Partido Socialista Revolucionario* (PSR); all were subsequently arrested and deported, along with leaders of the metalworkers union and the lawyer of the Centromin miners union.

But when the military regime followed the strict demands for austerity outlined by the IMF, responding to the pressure of a consortium of U.S. banks led by Manufacturers Hanover and Citibank in New York, new opposition arose.

On June 11, 1977, subsidies for some essential goods and services were curtailed, and the Peruvian *sole* devalued again against the dollar, resulting in a further 50 percent hike in gasoline and transportation fares, all on top of the 45 percent inflation suffered by Peruvians in 1976.

Riots broke out across the country. Feelings of frustration and betrayal that developed since 1975 were finally vented. The first general strike in Peru in over 50 years paralyzed Lima. Twenty civilians were killed and 500 were arrested, including 300 union leaders swept up in a dragnet. By the end of July, 3,056 workers had been fired under military authorization; later the figure swelled to over 6,000 people.

To calm the opposition, Morales Bermudez announced on July 28 that elections would be held in 1978 for a constituent assembly that would redraft the constitution and pave the way for a return to civilian rule by 1980. But it remained his last lifeline to stability while he has imposed further IMF-directed inflation on the Peruvian people.

1977 ended with the *sole* being priced at 141.5 per dollar, one out of every three Peruvians jobless, and some 30 percent of the population remaining illiterate and thereby deprived by law of the right to

Continued on page 21.



John Judis

Members of the Arab Deterrent Force stand guard outside a Beirut highrise.

By Our Correspondent
in the Mideast

MIDEAST

Rightist Christians sabotage reform of the Lebanese army

Mideast peace depends on ending Lebanon's civil war. And that depends on taking the army out of rightist hands.

Early in September, almost two years after the end of the civil war, the Lebanese government informed the UN Security Council that the two Lebanese army majors, Saad Haddad and Sami Chidiac, commanding the battalion long stationed in the south, could no longer speak for the army, negotiate with UN troops, or exercise authority in the region. These two officers and their troops had been collaborating with Israel since the war began.

The question raised here is: Why wait for almost two years to make this decision? Under Lebanese law collaboration with Israel is treason, and the collaboration of these officers and their men has been no small matter.

At the end of the civil war, Israel reinforced the Haddad-Chidiac battalion by bringing hundreds of Phalangist (Kataeb) and Chamounist militiamen from the port of Jounieh, north of Beirut, to Haifa and thence to the half dozen Maronite villages on the Lebanese side of the border. These mainly Maronite soldiers and militiamen, commanded by Haddad and Chidiac, have served for almost two years as loyal allies of Israel. Last March in Tel Aviv, Israeli Defense Minister, Ezer Weizman, introduced Major Haddad to Israeli Chief of Staff, General Gur in these words: "Commandant Haddad has been considered part of our forces for the past year and a half. It is high time you get to know him." (*Maariv*, March 10).

During the Israeli invasion of Lebanon last March these troops massacred Lebanese civilians at Khayyam, Maroun Al Ras and Bint Jbeil.

But throughout all this, Mayors Haddad and Chidiac have repeatedly asserted that they were in communication with and received orders from, the Lebanese army command. Neither the Defense Ministry or the Army Command denied this.

A strange country.

Israel built up these Christian rightist forces to create an Israeli-controlled buffer zone on the border and to prevent any Lebanese "settlement" that does not leave its Christian allies in control. Whenever a step towards a solution has been taken in Beirut, Israel, through its Lebanese troops in the south or its direct alliance with Phalangist and Chamounist leaders in Beirut, has rekindled the fires of conflict.

The first real strain between the Lebanese Army Command and Majors Haddad and Chidiac came when their men heavily shelled the Lebanese army bat-

talion sent into South Lebanon July 31 to symbolize restoration there of government authority. Threats and intermittent shelling by the Haddad-Chidiac troops have kept this battalion stalled at Kawkaba, some ten miles from its destination, ever since. "What a strange country this is," commented a UNIFIL (UN Forces in Lebanon) officer, "where one government pays two armies to fight each other."

The humiliating situation finally persuaded the Defense Ministry to place the two officers "at the Defense Ministry's disposal," tell them to collect their salaries in Beirut and order their soldiers to pick up their pay in Kawkaba. Practically speaking, this move made it impossible for the officers and soldiers to collect their wages but did not remove them from the payroll.

Prime Minister Selim Hoss recently revealed that President Sarkis at his conference with Syrian President Assad in Latakia, May 31, promised to get rid of Majors Haddad and Chidiac before sending the army battalion to the south. The president made no perceptible move to fulfill this pledge.

Only in September, when it had to get the UNIFIL mandate renewed, and when official complicity could no longer be concealed, did the government act.

Only in September, when it had to get the UNIFIL mandate renewed, and when official complicity could no longer be concealed, did the government act.

Coup d'etat.

The state has no unified, and hence no declared position on any of the crucial issues facing the country. In the absence of a unified policy and of leadership from the

president or anyone else, the entrenched forces of religious sectarianism have quietly effected a creeping *coup d'etat*. They have scrapped the agreement to balance sectarian representation in government, public institutions and especially the army on which the war was ended; they have put the right-wing Christian Maronites in every important government department. They have reverted to the pre-war system by which Christian Maronites were given greater power than Moslems.

Current efforts by a parliamentary commission to amend the army law to permit construction of an effective national army illustrate the nature of the problems involved in securing even "balanced" sectarian representation, let alone a secular army.

Lebanon's defense policy has always been defined in the slogan: "Lebanon's strength lies in its weakness." The sectarian character of the state imposes weakness. Only a centralized state and a developed political structure could produce and field a strong army: the indispensable prerequisite for a strong army is abolition of the political power of the sectarian leaderships. A strong army, moreover, means a national army drawing on all the country's nationals, an army that therefore could not be used for sectarian ends.

Since the political system precludes a strong army, the corollary of the strength-in-weakness axiom has been that "Lebanon counts on its international friends." Whenever its dominant position is threatened, political Maronitism looks to foreign intervention to uphold Maronite privilege or sovereignty: France in 1860 and 1920; U.S. in 1958; Syria in 1976 and Israel 1975 to present. Foreign intervention imposes or re-imposes the sectarian

political system—in defiance of the aspirations of most Lebanese.

The mission of Lebanon's sectarian army has never been to defend the country's borders against external aggression: Witness its total failure even to attempt to protect southern villages against repeated Israeli aggressions since 1967. Its mission has always been to defend Maronite not Lebanese sovereignty, to safeguard sectarian privilege against the "enemy within," the forces working for democratic and secular change in the system.

Yet, despite political Maronitism's virtual monopoly of military command posts, even this mission proved beyond the army's capacities. A volunteer army, it has attracted the economically deprived, hence many Moslems, and so acquired a sufficient number of Moslem lower officers and privates to make its use in domestic repression risky.

From 1970 the army trained and helped to arm the militias of the Christian right. These militias launched the civil war and did most of the fighting, but some higher army officers and their men also became involved and the army split. Younger and lower-ranking Moslems and Christian officers who formed the Lebanese Arab Army to fight with the Palestinians and the national movement, were arrested at war's end by the Syrians and kept in prison in Damascus until a few weeks ago. Army "loyalists" who fought with the rightist militias form the core of the "new" Lebanese army.

The parliamentary commission engaged in trying to amend the army law is trying to reduce the extraordinary powers that make the Commander in Chief (who, like the president, is always a Maronite) a law unto himself in peacetime as well as in war. It is also trying to bring the armed forces under civilian control.

The moderate reforms proposed appear to have won considerable support among deputies. Fuad Lahoud, chairman of parliament's defense committee, a Maronite conservative and former colonel, who is leading the army reform effort, has said: "The situation of the army has become incomprehensible. It cannot continue in its present form."

Political Maronitism, however, remains strongly opposed both to the proposed reforms and the conception of a "balanced" army. Its attitude towards a secular army is suggested by Prime Minister Hoss' revelation that some cabinet ministers refuse to work with officers who want a secular army.

Behind-the-scene wars.

The danger is that these modest reforms will be sapped of their content through compromise. A greater danger comes from behind-the-scenes moves—by the Commander in Chief, the Defense Minister and the President—to insure the continuing sectarian character of the army and its domination by political Maronitism. According to a report prepared for the parliamentary commission by Albert Mansour, Greek Catholic deputy from the Biqa and a leader of the national movement, these moves include:

- Confirmation of promotions made during the civil war of more than 1,200 privates and non-commissioned officers, all Christians, many of them affiliated with the Christian right militias, and cancellation of Moslem promotions made by the Lebanese Arab Army.

- Dismissal in the past year of 1,250 soldiers: 923 Moslems and 300 Christians. Of the Christians, about half left to take other jobs or emigrate; the rest were dismissed because they did not support political Maronitism. Other Moslem soldiers were "persuaded" to resign by transferring them to barracks known for their political bias where they risked being killed.

- Early dismissals of a disproportionate number of Moslems for "incompetence." Security checks made of all volunteers to determine their political leanings employ Christian right standards.

These practices, unless immediately halted, Mansour pointed out, will determine the character of the army for the better part of the next half century.

Construction of a national army and even of a "balanced" army appears in the Lebanese context to be a revolutionary task.

BY
DAVID HELVARG
&
LARRY REMER

"THERE'S A MAN WITH A GUN OVER THERE..."

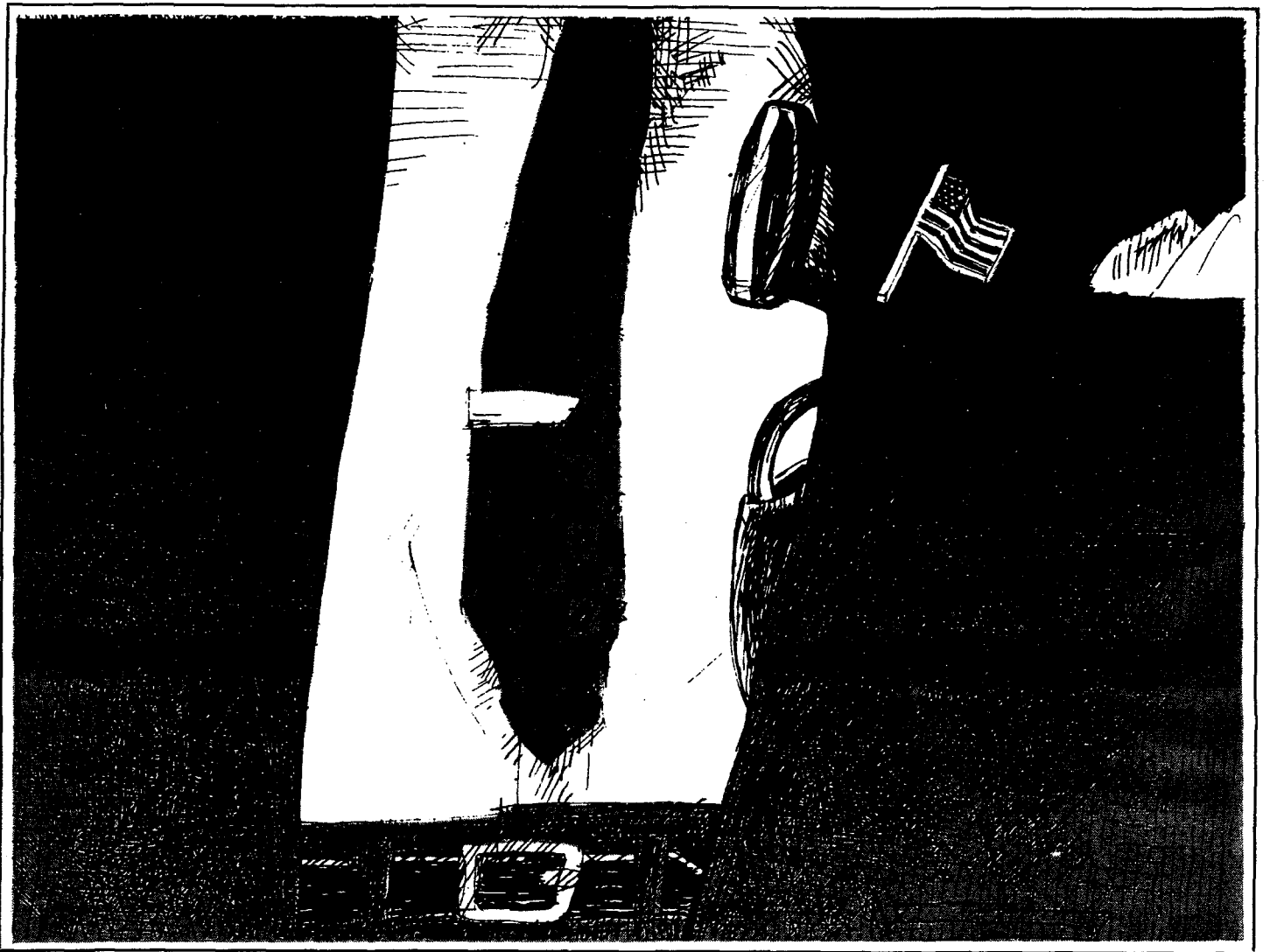


Illustration by
Tom Greensfelder

After maintaining a low profile for several years, stirrings are once again being heard from California's paramilitary right wing. Not since the '60s, when secret rightist commando groups—such as the California Rangers, the Minutemen, and the American Volunteer Group—boasted that their tentacles reached into every community in the state, has the right dared to show itself as brazenly as it is today. Over the past year, a rash of incidents involving the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party has indicated that the far right is actively recruiting new members and successfully courting public support.

On July 30, the tiny community of Oxnard in rural Ventura County was the scene of anti-Klan rioting when dozens of police with dogs and helicopters were called in to quell a large crowd of demonstrators who were protesting the KKK's showing of *Birth of a Nation*. The Klan had been actively organizing in Oxnard for several months, using the rape trial of a Latino there to inflame racist passions.

In other parts of the state, reinvigorated Klan dens have come to light when members have run afoul of law enforcement. In Los Angeles and San Diego Klansmen have been convicted in the past six months of carrying concealed and loaded weapons, shooting into occupied dwellings, and conspiracy to commit murder.

Orville "Butch" Watkins, 26, a den leader in San Diego, received a two-to-ten-year sentence for shooting up the homes of black families who had moved into predominantly white neighborhoods. Two weeks after that incident, four well-

armed members of Watkins' den were arrested en route to the home of a Chicago family who had moved into a white area.

In busting up Watkins' den, police seized four handguns—two .22 pistols, a 9-mm Browning, and a .357 magnum—from the Klansmen. A subsequent raid on Watkins' house netted a cache of rifles, ammunition and Klan literature that declared, "Never Accept Busing!", "White People Wake Up!", and "White Marines Unite." Also found were a number of invitations to a Pasadena meeting commemorating the 88th anniversary of Adolph Hitler's birth.

In Los Angeles, three Klansmen were convicted for plotting the assassination of Irv Rubin, the Southern California head of the Jewish Defense League. The three had been arrested with loaded guns outside the office of a Van Nuys photo album manufacturer with the same name. The three belonged to a 33-member North Hollywood den, which one former member has publicly declared once considered initiation rites requiring new recruits to shoot black people at random on the streets.

Heading up the defense committee for the accused Klansmen was Thomas Metzger, a Fallbrook TV repairman who bills himself as the KKK's "California Grand Dragon." Metzger charged police in San Diego and L.A. with framing the Klansmen with "totally trumped up charges."

The last time Metzger splashed into the news was as the architect of the KKK organizing drive at the Marine Corps' Camp Pendleton base. Metzger claims that the Klan has dens at several Marine

bases and in more than half a dozen California communities—including Riverside and Sacramento. Outside sources confirm that the Klan is also actively recruiting law enforcement personnel.

Another right-wing group presently active in organizing Marines is the White Brotherhood, headed by an old Metzger cohort, Rick Norton. Both Norton and Metzger date their rightist activities to the '60s when they were active together in the Liberty Lobby—a mass, chapter-based organization. Norton is also a member of the National States Rights Party, a vitriolic, anti-semitic outfit whose insignia, a thunderbolt, is taken from the twin strands of lightning worn by German SS officers during World War II.

The '60s were a heyday for the California paramilitary right, with dozens of far right, secret groups commanding a committed cadre of several hundred, if not a thousand, committed "patriots," who stockpiled weapons, collected intelligence on neighborhood "subversives," and conducted maneuvers in the desert in preparation for guerilla war against the government. Members of these self-styled secret armies were recruited through legal front groups, including fundamentalist churches, private gun clubs, and outposts of the VFW and the American Legion.

Taking to the hills.

Feeding the backlash to the social upheaval of the times with an ideology of "Christian anti-communism" and "racial superiority," rightist demagogues like "Reverend" Wesley Swift and L.A. television newscaster George Putnam reached out to millions in back-country

agricultural towns and defense industry suburbs with their message of hatred.

"They really believed that the communists were about to take over the government and that we had to prepare to take to the hills and fight to free the country," noted a former FBI informant who infiltrated the right during this period.

Though the FBI was supposed to keep close tabs on rightists, it turned a blind eye when the right wing carried out terrorist attacks on left-leaning groups. In San Diego, the FBI actually used a Minuteman splinter—the Secret Army Organization—to conduct a systematic terror campaign of bombings and snipings against anti-war activists, underground newspapers, and community organizers as part of its Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO) operations. The program was carried out with an FBI informant in the top leadership of the Secret Army, who received detailed instructions on a daily basis from his FBI superiors.

However, the government was not privy to all the secrets of the right. In November of 1976, a vast weapons cache was accidentally uncovered by two children hiking in the hills at the edge of the Mohave Desert. Out of three camouflaged bunkers built into the hillside, L.A. Sheriff's Deputies pulled five tons of armaments, equipment and provisions. "There was enough weaponry there to equip a 200-man army," declared L.A. Sheriff Peter Pitchess. As deputies probed through an array of weaponry that included mortars, heavy machine guns, dynamite, napalm, tracer ammunition, ground-to-air missiles, and hand grenades, investigators raided the home and foundry of Donald G. Wiggins, who owned the cache site, where they found another four tons of arms.

According to the Anti-Defamation League of the B'Nai B'rith, which has been monitoring hate groups for more than 25 years, the desert cache site had been established by "Reverend" Swift, the patriarch of the paramilitary right in the '50s and '60s. A white-haired fundamentalist preacher, Swift received his ministry from a mail order firm and had been a KKK rifle team instructor in the '40s.

Swift's home base was Lancaster, only 30 miles from the cache site, and in the '60s he presided over a complex of rightist groups headquartered there, including the Christian Defense League and the Christian Anti-Communist League. On his syndicated radio show, Swift warned a listenership of almost two million of the "rising Sodom and Gomorrah" of the modern age and "the coming Armageddon of a communist takeover." Inside his Christian Defense League was hidden the paramilitary California rangers—an umbrella network connecting most of the paramilitary right.

Swift's cache, with a value estimated in excess of \$200,000, reflected the right's sophisticated ability to finance a far-flung secret network. Funding came largely from small contributors (Swift's radio show netted more than \$100,000 annually) and sympathetic businessmen and heirs. The most famous of these is Philip Earl Sheib, son of the owner of a chain of California auto body and paint shops, who was arrested in the '60s for paramilitary activities and was recently charged with complicity in the Swift arms cache. In addition, there were rumors of large block grants from oil and agricultural interests throughout the Southwest.

The decline of the right at the end of the '60s reflected both the process of urbanization and the demise of the left, that it was a reaction to. Some of the old guard—like Swift—died off, while others retreated to the country, establishing new bases in remote areas like Coeur D'Alene, Ida., and Four Corners, N.M.

Of those who continued to build the most notable is Swift's former second-in-command, Colonel William P. Gale, U.S. Army (ret.). A counter-insurgency expert who worked with the CIA's Gen. Edward Lansdale during World War II, Gale directed the campaign to suppress the Huk rebellion in the Philippines at the end of the war. Under Swift, he was the commander of the Rangers, and after Swift's death he sought the mantle of leadership

of the California right.

Presently, Gale is operating out of a ranch in the foothills of the Sierras and has founded the New Christian Crusade Church (NCCC), which is closely linked to Klan activities. Tom Metzger, for example, claims he is a minister in Gale's group and the North Hollywood Klan den recruits members from among his followers.

Feeding the grim economic picture of the '70s with an appeal to racist solutions, the Klan has led the attack on affirmative action and on so-called illegal aliens who sneak into the U.S. from Mexico searching for work.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFFS UNEARTHED A BUNKER IN THE DESERT WHERE THE NEW RIGHT HAD HIDDEN 5 TONS OF ARMAMENTS, ENOUGH TO EQUIP 200 PEOPLE WITH MORTARS, MACHINE GUNS, DYNAMITE AND GROUND-TO-AIR MISSILES.

"White people are becoming increasingly discriminated against," declared David Duke of Metairie, La., a former member of the Nazi Party who now serves as National Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. "It's about time white people began to organize. This country was founded by white people with Christian ideals and the government should be oriented towards the needs of the white majority."

Dressed in a seersucker suit, Duke told a press conference at the U.S./Mexican border last Christmas that the Klan's focus on halting the flow of Mexican labor into the country was designed to save white jobs.

In early April, four L.A. Klansmen wearing "White Power" T-shirts picked up a young Mexican hitch-hiker on I-5 north of Oceanside. After throwing out his papers proving his legal residency, they attempted to turn him into the Border Patrol as an illegal alien.

Support whites in southern Africa.

One of the most unifying issues for the California right has been the defense of white majority regimes in southern Africa. Following the 1975 attack by black Marines on suspected Klansmen at Camp Pendleton, Tom Metzger explained his theory as to the probable cause:

"We had a pro-white Rhodesia rally scheduled for Balboa Park [in San Diego] on Sunday, the day after the assault. Our 16 or 17 guys at Pendleton were scheduled to go down there the night the attack took place. There's a terrorist organization working in the states that's more militant than the Black Panthers. We think this terrorist group is linked to the communist-directed guerilla movements in Africa—the ZANU and ZAPU—and that these black Marines are part of it, part of the infiltration of our armed forces."

The Klan rally took place as scheduled. Organizers claimed it was a success when a dozen people showed up. While the turnout at mass events is often small, right-wing leaders state they are setting the groundwork and waiting for the "right conditions." In the meantime, the soldiers of the right stand ready to defend the cause of white people anywhere in the world.

California today has also become a center for mercenary recruitment in America. Half of the 400 Americans serving with the security forces in Rhodesia hail from the Golden State. During the Angolan civil war, right-wing circles formed prime recruiting grounds for the Anaheim-based El Kamas Enterprises, which outfitted and trained soldiers of fortune in the Mohave Desert before sending them overseas. Jerry "Longo" Tartaglia, a former Minuteman and Secret Army leader, served as a prime contact for mercenary recruitment in Orange County.

Even among the right, the National Socialist White People's Party (the Nazis) are considered outcasts. Comprised primarily of refugees from the white urban underclass—misfits, malcontents, and reform school graduates—the Nazis seek to obliterate the desperation of their lives with images of death. Brown-shirted

storm troopers toting swastika flags and other Hitlerian memorabilia will suddenly appear on streetcorners, college campuses, or in the midst of Third World communities for the sole purpose of provoking confrontations. In the fall of 1976, a crowd of 400 shoppers chased 30 Nazis through the downtown shopping district of San Francisco.

Last year, the San Francisco Nazi chapter received nationwide publicity after opening the Rudolph Hess book store across the street from a Jewish synagogue in the Sunset district. When the owner of the storefront, a Jewish survivor of the Auschwitz concentration camp, discov-

ered who his tenants were, he started eviction proceedings. But before the eviction notice could be served, a crowd of neighbors broke into the store, trashing the contents and setting them on fire. Police arrested two members of the crowd: another survivor of Auschwitz and his 24-year-old son.

However, the Nazis don't always limit themselves to acts of provocation. During the early part of 1975, the National Socialist Liberation Front—a Nazi splinter—set off a series of bombs at left-wing bookstores, homes, and community centers in Los Angeles. "We know the cops aren't interested if we bomb the left," boasted NSLF leader Joseph Tommasi, who was later gunned down by another rival Nazi faction.

Today, the Nazis maintain more than half a dozen chapters scattered throughout California.

Rounding up a Posse.

The contemporary group whose spirit most closely matches the right-wing armies of the '60s is the Posse Comitatus. A loosely organized network of vigilantes established in 1969, the Posse opposes federal income taxes, gun control, the United Farm Workers and the American Indian Movement—all of whom they identify with the monolithic communist conspiracy that runs out of Washington, D.C. Near Fresno last year, Posse members attacked UFW pickets and, when local Sheriff's deputies sought to intervene, turned their shotguns on the cops. A number of confrontations have also occurred between the Posse and agents of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) Bureau.

A more recent attempt by the Posse to establish a political sanctuary in the Sierra Nevada mountains was broken up this summer when the Posse candidate for Sheriff of Alpine County was discovered padding voter registration rolls. After their defeat at the polls on June 6, a grand jury indicted several Posse members.

The Posse is one of the few right-wing groups with direct ties to the '60s paramilitary armies. Posse members include former Minutemen, Secret Army Members and California Rangers.

Although lacking the broad support for paramilitary actions it had a decade ago, the California right has recently begun to reorganize the two-tiered infrastructure of that period. The Prop. 13 tax revolt and the emergence of evangelical Christian churches organizing against gay rights, nudity and abortion has created a new conservative milieu for the right to grow. While legal front groups conduct propaganda and recruitment, a network of armed cadre is being trained and equipped to carry out—when necessary—terrorist activity. Scratch any of these far right organizations and you'll find such an apparatus not far below the surface.

Their aim, in the words of Tom Metzger, is "to win this war between the establishment, the leftists, and our people. We have to make this country safe for white America."

David Helvarg and Larry Remer are regular contributors to IN THESE TIMES.

EDITORIAL

For the past few years, the "inflation-unemployment trade-off" has made a steady descent from the clouds of economic theory to the lower altitudes of partisan conflict. In the past two weeks, the descent has accelerated with the following events:

- The Carter administration announced it would soon make public a tough anti-inflation strategy, leaking its inclination to adopt a wage-price "guidelines" strategy.

- Treasury Secretary W. Michael Blumenthal forecast a "stronger" dollar would come next year from administration plans geared to slowed economic growth, higher interest rates, rising unemployment, and new government initiatives to expand exports.

- The Senate moved closer to passing a natural gas deregulation bill that would raise gas prices and add about \$50 million to energy corporations' revenues, over and above the more than quadrupling of gas prices since 1970.

- The Senate Finance committee reported out a bill, already passed by the House, that would cut corporation and capital gains taxes.

- Liberal Democrats Dukakis (Mass.) and Fraser (Minn.) lost primary elections to candidates riding the wave of anti-tax sentiment.

- Public employees—from firefighters to teachers—struck in communities across the nation for higher pay and better working conditions.

- Congressional Black Caucus chair Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) walked out of a White House meeting when President Carter and Vice-President Mondale rejected proposals for more effective administration support for full employment planning.

- George Meany denounced proposals for "voluntary" wage-price guidelines as a program for employer-enforced wage controls that labor would never accept.

- William Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists, served notice on President Carter and several liberal members of Congress that his union would no longer support them because they had "compromised" away full employment planning, national health insurance, labor law reform, workplace safety enforcement, equitable energy policy, and other goals important to labor.

Trade-off politics a losing game

He hinted at labor support for independent, if not third party, politics.

- The UAW called a special conference on national political strategy.

These events reflect the political crisis engulfing the major parties from the inflation-unemployment dilemma endemic to corporate-capitalism. Coming in such close succession, they represent the intensifying conflict splitting corporate-liberal leaders from their traditional labor and black constituencies. Carter's prestige, enhanced by Camp David, is not of sufficient force to impose an armistice on the class war at home.

Liberal politicians are finding that they cannot square their commitment to the corporate order with reducing unemployment and holding down prices; nor with delivering at the same time fairer taxation, adequate social services, and stable or rising real income for wage-earners. They are moving to the right, choosing preservation of the corporate system over everything else. They are playing off taxpayers against the poor, employed against unemployed, private-sector workers against public-sector workers, consumers against wage-earners, white against black. Whatever the rhetoric, in matters of policy, corporate-liberals are becoming indistinguishable from corporate-conservatives, Democrats from Republicans, Carter's administration from Ford's and Nixon's.

After 42 months of business expansion, the longest peacetime expansion since 1945, with inflation running at about 8 percent annually, the official unemployment rate is stuck at about 6 percent, 12 percent for blacks, and workers' real earnings (after taxes and adjusted for inflation) are down. The system cannot take even this weak dose of "prosperity." All its doctors agree it is severely overheated, and are prognosticating, if not prescribing, more unemployment, reduced real wages and cutbacks in social services.

Within the limits of corporate capitalism, recession, unemployment and wage restraints (not price- or profit-cuts) are the antidote to inflation; higher prices, business tax breaks and bigger profit margins the antidote to recession. But the antidote in each case has become less potent with each recurrence and in fact has become part of the disease. Inflation and unemployment no longer combat one another but combine to infect the entire political and economic order.

The "trade-off" has become a tandem. It is a no-win situation for the majority of the people as workers, consumers and taxpayers.

The politics of the "inflation-unemployment trade-off" is the politics of preserving corporate capitalism. It is also a politics driving the nation into deeper divisions along lines of class, race and sex—and, however unintentionally, into party realignments.

Labor and black leaders falling out with Carter and other liberals are responding from weakness—that is why they can get nothing from traditional political bargaining and negotiation. Their weakness lies in their stance as "interest groups" seeking more within a system that has less and less to give. Carter and other politicians know they can play interest groups off against each other. But it is precisely that weakness that is forcing labor and blacks beyond the limits of "interest-group" politics, beyond the old-time religion of the "politics of compromise." It is also forcing them to reassess the limits of the two-party system in its present form.

Short of breaking with "trade-off" politics, labor and black leaders have nowhere to go but down the path to selling out their own constituents' interests—and perhaps becoming ex-leaders. Their claims for "more" are losing credibility with the people—including many of their own rank and file—who recognize that

within the system "more" becomes less.

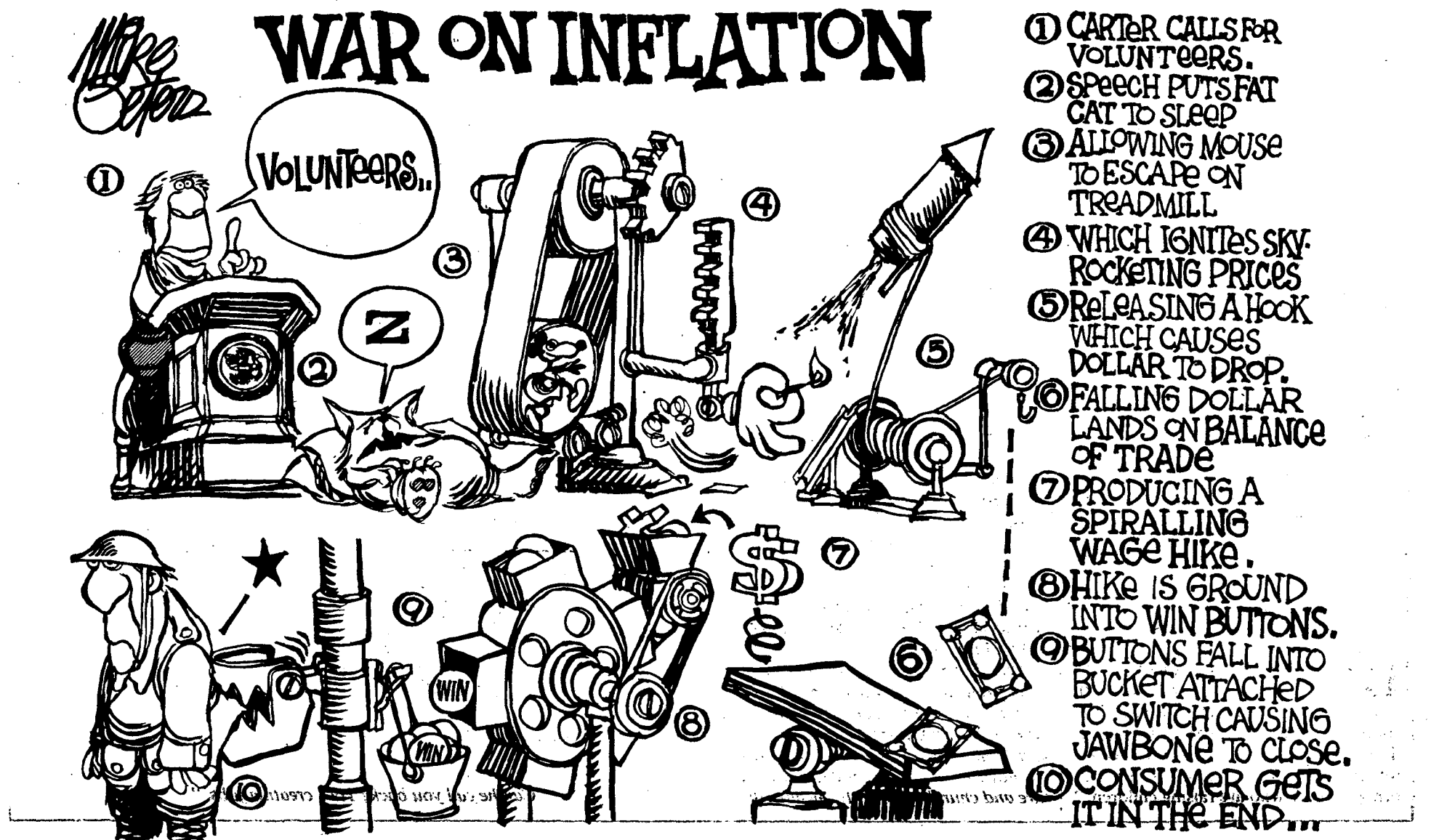
Labor leaders are finding that they cannot simply say, "No," to wage and price controls; they must propose an alternative incomes policy that all working people can perceive as generally beneficial. Black leaders cannot simply say, "No," to unemployment, or "Yes," to a bill like Humphrey-Hawkins; they must propose a full employment planning program that is credibly workable.

To do that, they will have to clear new political ground in mainstream party politics for a movement going beyond the "trade-off" politics of preserving corporate-capitalism. It is a practical matter of aligning ends and means. If capitalism is an end in itself, then "interest-group" politics is an unavoidable "means," along with unemployment and inflation, unfair taxes and deteriorating social services. Equally unavoidable is a political dead end for the labor and black movements either as interest groups capable of sustained protection of their immediate interests or as movements for social justice.

Events of the past two weeks give quickening signs that rank and file and leaders alike among labor and blacks recognize they are approaching a parting of the ways.

Short of moving toward a political realignment that offers space for developing a socialist alternative to the corporate order, demands for full employment, equitable taxes, stable prices and adequate real wages, will remain uncredible. They will continue to appear mutually antagonistic—as they are under capitalism—leaving the initiative to the Lords Corporate and their allies on the right. The labor and black movements will be unable to create the conditions for the broader political alliances necessary to check the rightward drift of the corporate consensus. They will preside over interest groups increasingly vulnerable to social injustice and political isolation.

"Trade-off politics" is no longer practical for the labor and black movements. If they fail to turn from their present position of weakness to a new strength in a "politics of principle," they will continue to play the losing game of interest-group politics. And they will not be the sturdy American pragmatists they take themselves to be.



LETTERS

THE ISSUE IS THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

AS A FEMINIST, PACIFIST AND FORMER coordinator of the United Farm Workers' boycott in my town, I share Juli Loesch's concern for redistributive justice (*ITT*, Sept. 6). However, I believe she has got it backwards in relation to abortion.

Making abortion illegal will not bring about justice for women. We had no rights before the Supreme Court decision that we do not have now. If Juli and her associates transferred the energy they now spend on harassing the desperate (it is *always* an act of desperation) women who need abortions to constructive alternatives such as better contraceptives, day care, job opportunities and higher pay for women, ending discrimination against pregnant women, ending the sexual exploitation of women, and so on, the number of abortions would decline naturally.

It is hard for some of us to imagine the time when desperate women jammed coathangers inside themselves or lay on dirty kitchen tables to endure intense pain with no anesthetic. If we cannot control our bodies we cannot control our lives. A "feminist" who is against the right to choose is a contradiction in terms.

—Jean Peterman
President, Bowling Green (Ohio) NOW

BUT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

CHEERS FOR MAY ALICE JEFFERS AND her struggle against poverty and exploitation. She certainly disproves Karen Moshewitz's misconception (*ITT*, Sept. 20) that women who have turned against abortion have done so because of racist-sexist or Papist plots for world domination!

I am a childless working woman with a very limited income (less than \$2000 a year). Society offers to abort any children conceived by me "for free" while such basic necessities as food, clothing, and housing are *not* free. This makes me angry and suspicious.

This is not "right to choose." No woman is exercising "free choice" if she is driven by economic circumstances to wish that her unborn young—and even her born young—were dead.

Instead of telling us we're "superstitious" for respecting the humanity of our own offspring, I would urge feminists to build networks of support for women who are in stress because of an unexpected pregnancy. I don't just mean cash grants from Holy Mother the State. I mean emotional and social, as well as financial aid so that we won't be stampeded into unwanted abortions by immature boyfriends, profiteering abortionists, rejecting parents, or our own feelings of fear and helplessness.

It is pure machismo to view pregnancy as an abnormality, a disease to be eradicated. Any support for pregnant women, to be really helpful and humane, must be based on the feminist consciousness that we are not wombs to be deactivated. We are human beings with living interrelationships with other human beings, with lives to be fulfilled.

—Juli Loesch
Erie, Pa.

KID ME NOT

I HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT Michael Lerner's comment (*ITT*, Aug. 30) that "we need to create an ethic of responsibility so that those without children are expected to give active support toward the financial and social well-being of those who are raising children."

On the one hand, child-raising couples in modern industrial societies are too isolated. Such isolation renders this nuclear family more vulnerable to breakdown than an extended family based on kinship or neighborhood. More needs to be done to reduce the isolation of families.

But I balk at the unqualified suggestion that people who choose not to have children should be made to feel obligated to contribute time and money to people who do. (I do support the position that all society, not just "those without children," should pay taxes to support day care centers and other social services for poor parents, but that position is obviously based on values different from those Lerner is espousing.)

In a world suffering numerous symptoms of overpopulation, people who choose not to have children should be entitled to the minimum reward of freedom from social pressure to support other people's kids.

—Kip Sullivan
Mill Valley, Calif.

EXCOMMUNICATE HITLER?

IN RESPONSE TO *ITT*'S GROWING PRO-Christian stance, I'm writing to defend the socialist atheist position against Christianity. Religion, particularly Christianity, isn't only an opiate but also reactionary. Jesus himself, and Paul afterward, explicitly opposed revolution. (Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's.) Nor did they oppose slavery, despite Jesus claiming to be a friend of the poor. Paul even went so far as to send a runaway slave back to his master!

The Gospels form the ideological basis of antisemitism as we know it. Jesus explicitly accused the Jews of being sons and daughters of "Satan" in the Gospel of John. At the Nuremberg trials, Nazi leaders justified the Holocaust in part with Bible quotes, as Luther justified his antisemitism.

Christianity is also anti-woman. Paul said that the man is the head of the woman, even as Christ is the head of the church. In the Middle Ages, the witch burnings amounted to a systematic terror campaign to keep women enslaved. The anti-abortion movement is the heir to this tradition.

In this century, Christianity has always supported fascism. Most major churches supported Hitler almost from the beginning. Pope Pius could have ruined Hitler and Mussolini in the bud, simply by excommunicating them, but had no reason to, as both were good Catholics.

Finally, religion encourages a metaphysical world view which is in complete conflict with the materialism necessary to understand our problems here in the real world. This is why socialists have always opposed Christianity.

—Tyrone Walls
Chicago

Editor's Note: Socialists have not always opposed Christianity. In fact, Christian socialists were a major part of the socialist movement in the U.S. when it was a significant social movement. A very high proportion of leading Socialist women came to political socialism through the Women's Christian Temperance Union, whose founder, Frances Willard, was a socialist. A large part of Eugene V. Debs' great popularity came from his close association with the Christian socialists. This was clearly reflected in his language.

The church, particularly the Catholic church, has generally played a conservative role in modern time, but religion, and sometimes the church, have also been progressive forces. Arguments for both sides can be made from scripture and church history. Ironically, those

socialists who most strongly uphold atheistic purity and who most vociferously condemn Christianity and other religions tend to project their socialism as a secular form of religion.

STRAIGHT TALK

AS A GAY WOMAN, I WAS DELIGHTED to read Michael Lerner's article on the family and his proposed strategy for defending gay rights. All too rarely does the straight left really try to analyze the psychological underpinnings to the attack on gays. Even rarer is it to hear any straights actually proposing strategies for how to counter that attack.

Too often we in the left fail to acknowledge creative and insightful leaders. Lerner is a case in point. Lerner was the founder of the New American Movement. He proposed a California tax initiative to shift taxes from working people to the rich some seven years before the right picked up on the issue with Proposition 13.

His book, *The New Socialist Revolution*, is still the best introduction to the thought of the democratic left, and its chapter on what socialism would look like in the U.S. is really valuable. Now he's a psychologist, working on the social-psychological obstacles to the development of class consciousness. It's an impressive career, and I think people like this who stick it out and make real contributions to our thinking should be given more recognition.

—Connie Whitebrook
San Francisco

ABORTING THE POOR

AUTOMATION IS MAKING BIG CAPITAL less and less dependent on a human workforce. A class-structured society which has long guaranteed an exploitable labor pool is now finding the poor to be a liability rather than an asset. The response from those in power has been predictable: People who were formerly "inferior" have now become "expendable."

Karen Moshewitz's letter (*ITT*, Sept. 20) in defense of human abortion inadvertently plays into the hands of the neo-Malthusian "population-bombers," the Madison Avenue corporate elites, contemporary social Darwinists, and the pseudo-scientific racists of our times.

Like the right-wing "prophets" of the early industrial revolution, today's zero-growth zealots define human worth in terms of one's value to the economy. The "obsolete" poor, having been effectively denied the basic necessities of life for centuries, are now offered abortions precisely because these needs remain unmet. Abortion, of course, does nothing to improve the social or economic status of the poor; it merely makes them fewer. Depicted as a "woman's right" by its proponents, its actual practice serves only to preserve the status quo.

Women do not "choose" abortion because it is something desirable. In fact, they rarely submit to it at all in the absence of certain pre-existing problems: economic inequities, oppressive traditions, and social neglect. Legal abortion as a woman's option legitimizes conformity to these prejudices, undermines collective responsibility, and forces pregnant women to become the new scapegoats for widespread injustice.

The very foundation of equality is eroded by a legal situation which empowers an aggressor to choose the elimination of a subordinate. Victims of racism and sexism have nothing to gain by collaborating with a power structure which entices us to sacrifice our children for the benefit of a degenerate, self-serving, profit-motivated, capitalistic system.

—Elizabeth Moore
Washington, D.C.

GREAT WHITE HOPE

JOE HEUMANN'S DELIGHTFUL PIECE on Muhammed Ali misses the most essential contradictions of the man. Heumann replays all the reasons that Ali appeals to us as a symbol of the multiple rebellions of our time—his affronts to white supremacy, Christianity, the U.S. government. But he leaves out the other reason that Ali appeals—for all of his rebelliousness, he is a quintessentially American character, embodying the spirit of individual achievement, determination and yankee ingenuity that are so integral to the American vision. That's what made Ali rich (along with his prodigious physical gifts).

And that's what made his fight with Spinks take on such a new meaning. Because for the first time in Ali's career he had become the great white hope. Yes, against that coarse, uneducated, toothless brawler from the worst ghetto in St. Louis, Muhammad Ali represented the values of mainstream America. When Ali becomes a white hope that's really the end of an era. While we can cheer Ali's victory, let's mourn the passing of the time.

—Lou Josephs
Chicago

CORRECTION

The article by Douglas Foster on the United Farm Workers in our issue No. 42 was not credited to Pacific News Service, which holds the copyright. We apologize for the error.

Editor's note: Please keep letters under 250 words. Otherwise we must make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, please type and double-space letter, or at least write clearly and with wide margins.



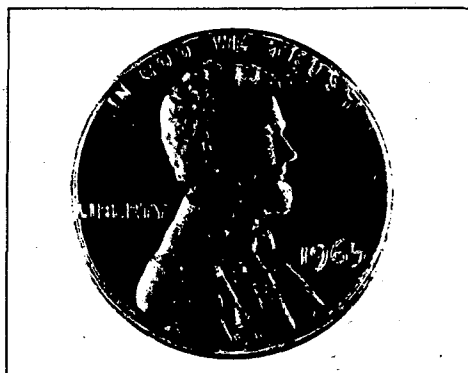
RED CENT COLLECTIVE

As recession looms: free enterprise orthodoxy booms

THE SPECTRE OF A DISILLU- sioned public is haunting the corporate board room. A decade of economic ills has left its mark. Public opinion is increasingly anti-business; faith in the "free enterprise" system has reached rock bottom. But corporate America has come out swinging with a pro-business, anti-egalitarian of- fensive that signals the final collapse of the old Keynesian capital/labor alliance.

•Privately endowed "free enterprise chairs" are popping up on U.S. campuses. Jack Higgins, a retired insurance executive and Goodyear Professor of Free Enterprise at Kent State labels himself a "business missionary": "We need to break down the walls of Jericho and correct the many negative misconceptions about business." According to John Ward, director of free enterprise activities at Loyola University, there are 20 free enterprise chairs already in existence and 20 more on the way.

•A Phillips Petroleum Co. \$800,000 film series on "American Enterprise" has already been viewed by more than 8 million students and shown in over four-fifths of the public schools in New York State.



In an ad Phillips outlined its position: "The system itself is in danger. And if we don't stand up for it, who will?"

•This year's TV economic series will be hosted not by New Dealer John Kenneth Galbraith but by the dean of the "new-right" economists, Milton Friedman. A similar series to be hosted by the liberal ex-president of Haverford College, John Coleman, failed to get off the ground due to lack of corporate sponsorship.

•Dow Chemical, Ralston-Purina, and other corporations have sponsored student private enterprise contests. Entries thus far: a TV quiz show called "Free Enterprise Bowl" and a film about a capitalist go-getter who invents the Weed Eater machine.

•The Mobil Oil Corp. annually buys

about \$4 million of ad space for its "advocacy advertising" program including the widely read series: "The Capitalist Revolution" and "Toward a Healthier Business Climate."

The corporate brass is not mistaken in its mistrust of the public. According to a 1976 public opinion survey carefully constructed by Peter Hart Associates, over half of those expressing an opinion agreed that "big business is the source of most of what's wrong in this country today." Three quarters of those expressing an opinion believed that "profits mainly benefit stockholders." Only a quarter thought that "profits mainly create prosperity."

According to a 1966 poll by the University of Michigan Center for Political Studies, 55 percent expressed "a great deal of confidence" in the "major companies." By 1973 that figure had fallen to 20 percent. Between 1958 and 1972 the percentage agreeing with the statement: "The government is pretty much run by a few big interests" rose from 18 percent to 53 percent.

Why this loss in public confidence? Not enough jobs? Prices going through the ceiling? Corporate profiteering from products that kill you and working conditions that make you sick. Watergate? Government corruption? Not according to William Simon. At a conference on new directions in corporate philanthropy held in New York last October, the former Secretary of the Treasury argued: "No other society in my memory has reached such heights of prosperity for its people and yet has raised an entire new class of men and women who are hostile to the very institutions that make that progress possible.... They are the ones who have tilted many of our universities and colleges toward the Marxist teachings."

Later, in a *New York Times* interview, he asked, "Why should businessmen be financing left-wing intellectuals? ...I'm not for destroying academic freedom but for broadening it."

Business' latest blitz is not just one more attempt to manipulate public opinion. What makes this campaign different? And, more importantly, what explains its hard line "free enterprise" con-

tents? Why have so many corporate barons rejected the economics of John Maynard Keynes in favor of the economics of Calvin Coolidge?

The unanimity and urgency of the response stems from the heightened role of politics in insuring the profitability of capitalist enterprise. The increasing economic role of government lends unprecedented importance to public opinion. The result, according to the half truth of a Mobil ad, is "a massive transfer of power ...from those who produce goods to those who produce ideology."

The pre-New Deal rhetoric of the campaign reflects a growing sense among business people that political pressures for sustained full employment, workplace safety, equal employment practices, and for an adequate welfare system have made the state part of their problem as well as part of their solution.

Since the Depression, the government's role in the economy has grown steadily. Many government programs—social security, unemployment insurance, the works project administration, welfare—are the result of working class pressure. When profits are down, capitalists as well have called upon the state. The Mobil ads speak warmly of FED's efforts to "bolster the private sector" during the great depression.

In the wake of the great depression, the Committee on Economic Development, a major corporate lobby, sold business and the public on an active economic role for the state to combat the effects of the business cycle and to ward off stagnation. Today some corporate groups, notably those assembled by the Trilateral Commission, still promote an interventionist economic policy by the state, and speak favorably of economic planning. But the dominant tendency of the present ideological assault is to get the government out of the economy.

(Part II next week.)

The Red Cent Collective consists of socialist economists working in Amherst, Mass.: Sam Bowles, Joe Bowring, Harry Cocaine, Richard Edwards, Diane Flaherty, Michele Naples, Nancy Rose, Juliet Schor and Andrew Zimbalist.

BOOKS

Now you can disagree with *Who Governs*

WHO REALLY RULES? NEW HAVEN AND COMMUNITY POWER REEXAMINED

By G. William Domhoff
Goodyear Publishing Company, \$6.95

G. William Domhoff's new book, *Who Really Rules?*, is a well-written and extremely useful work for anyone seriously interested in American politics. At one and the same time this slim volume is: 1) a superb factual and methodological critique of Robert Dahl's *Who Governs?*; 2) an excellent model of how to conduct power structure research at the local level; and 3) one of the best analyses available of the origins and early history of the federal urban renewal program.

After writing a number of important books on national politics, Domhoff decided to delve into the intricacies of the small Connecticut city that houses Yale University because, as he puts it, "Political scientist Robert A. Dahl's highly regarded book on New Haven, *Who Governs?*, is one of the major bulwarks of the 'pluralistic' conception of America that makes it all but impossible to understand the larger ills of the society generated by the needs and policies of the corporation-based national ruling class."

Dahl's argument that the economic and social elites in New Haven are two separate groups, that urban renewal was not produced "by the wants and demands of the Economic Notables" but rather by ambitious Democratic Party politicians, and that Yale University does not dominate the city, are systematically demolished by Domhoff.

Who Really Rules? first establishes the existence of a local social/economic elite tied to the national corporate power structure, and then goes on to show in

convincing historical detail how this elite, and particularly Yale University, used its connections to set the priorities and framework of the urban renewal program that Mayor Richard C. Lee later claimed credit for.

Domhoff does not deny that the mayor had an important role to play in pushing the renewal forward, but this role was primarily as a public relations man, selling the program to the electorate. The program itself had already been formulated by powerful people connected to Yale and the local Chamber of Commerce. The businessmen sold the idea to the mayor, and not vice versa as Dahl believed.

What enabled Domhoff to amass the evidence for this thorough critique, in addition to the help of several New Haven historians and his own interviews and archival research, was the generosity of Robert Dahl. Dahl, as if in a quiet *mea culpa* for past errors, gave Domhoff complete use of his files from *Who Governs?* Dahl had based his analysis mostly on extensive personal interviews with key New Haven figures, and Domhoff quotes passages from these interviews to point out mistakes Dahl made either by asking the wrong questions or by failing to follow up crucial leads due to ideological preconceptions.

Two principal criticisms of Dahl's method are that he accepted at face value the self-serving answers of politicians who wanted to convince him of their power and of businessmen who denied having any; and that he viewed local events entirely in a local context, ignoring their vital links to state and national institutions and policies.

Who Really Rules? makes no such oversight. It treats us to a fascinating

account of the national maneuvering that transformed urban renewal from a potential housing program into a definite boondoggle for downtown business interests. New Haven's much-heralded "Negro removal" program of the 1950s and '60s is a perfect example of the type of redevelopment effort corporate planners, realtors, and developers had in mind while lobbying for the federal subsidies.

The last chapter of the book discusses national policy-making and its relationship to local politics in more general terms. Domhoff concludes:

"It should be the task of community power structure studies to determine the exact nature of the local power network, the ways it relates to the national ruling class, and factors which account for variations in these relationships from city to city. Such studies should begin with the assumption that the city is a growth

machine, and that ruling-class leaders in different cities have different strategies for growth because of their city's specific functions (e.g., financial, industrial, educational, recreational) in the regional, national, and—increasingly—international political economy of corporate capitalism."

The book's 180 pages are packed with detailed information that is sometimes difficult to wade through, but the effort is highly worthwhile. It is a practical handbook for researchers and organizers alike. For academics, it has the added pleasure of being a long-awaited rejoinder to all those dogmatic pluralists who constantly frustrate arguments about political power by asking: "How can you disagree with *Who Governs?*?"

—Marc Weiss
Marc Weiss is a Regent's Fellow in City and Regional Planning at the University of California, Berkeley.

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DIALOG

To be and not to be: Something's rotten in Dane's Russia

BACK IN JULY, ITT RAN AN ARTICLE ENTITLED "AMERICANS do not understand war!" by Danish journalist Jorgen Dragsdahl that said, in effect, the Soviet people, knowing war in a way Americans cannot know war, are a force for world peace, which the American people are not. "I thought the fallacy so obvious that ITT would be bombarded with responses. Here it is mid-September, and not word one about the Dragsdahl article. I may not be the ranking world expert on international affairs, but *someone* ought to point out what was rotten in the Denmark journalist's assumption.

To put it most crudely and pointedly, the American people, able to read and see beyond official lies, finally did have something to do with ending the Vietnam horror, and the Pentagon might well hesitate about another such venture. But the Soviet people, fed only the official lies by a government-controlled media, still think the Czechs loved and welcomed them in 1968.

Not that Dragsdahl was wrong about the Soviet people's feelings about war and peace. I made the Soviet scene for the first time last year, as a tourist—with the inevitable mixed feelings of one who once ardently rooted for the world's first great attempt to supplant the profit motive with a truly social system, but that's another story.

I cannot pretend to have significantly penetrated Soviet life and thinking in 18 days in seven cities of European Russia, Siberia and Central Asia, and I will break new ground by not writing a book about it.

Suffice to say that everything we saw, heard and sensed, every chat we had with citizens, confirmed Dragsdahl's premise of their overwhelming yearning for peace, their lack of animosity toward Americans, even their puzzlement about American fears. Hell, it is a valid proposition on its face that a people who lost 20 million in the big war (we lost 350,000) and whose homeland was devastated equivalent to this country being leveled from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, understand and hate war with an intensity not fully comprehensible to Americans. No argument here.

But if you want to get discouraged, try these very same Soviet people on any specific of the world scene.

Our guide Tanya was a genial woman, open enough with our small group to comment wryly on her much lower salary than a bus driver after years as a skilled Intourist guide. During a little unofficial chatter, she mentioned Vietnam, which brought the reflex response from one of the Americans: Czechoslovakia.

But didn't we know that the Czech's Russian friends saved them from a fascist fate and that the Czechs were grateful?

Those of us who had been in Prague broke the news to Tanya that all but a handful of Czechs have become Russian-haters since the invasion which snuffed out Dubcek's attempt to restore the moral image of Communism in the world, and that they loathe the regime installed by the Kremlin.

With commendable spirit, Tanya shot back, "Why should I believe you? That's your propaganda." A bit later, seeking detente, she added with a Russian shrug that after all everybody knew Dubcek was doing bad things, was taking the Czechs down the wrong road.

"Shouldn't the Czechs be the judge of that, not the Russians?" she was asked. Tanya seemed to take that under advise-

ment. I'm not sure it quite meshed gears with her.

There is the point. You cannot come to grips on these things with the ordinary Russian who has not been out of his country. Staggeringly, in a world of instant communicative marvels (and four decades after the Germans "did not know") the Russians really do not know. Tanya, somewhat more sophisticated than most, actually believes that the Czechs welcomed the Russians. (Will she ask a few cautious questions after our exchange?)

The average Russian has no more idea what his country is doing to throttle and distort Czechoslovakia and Poland than the average American understands what our corporations do in South America. Ah, but in this country, those who do know and care can and do sound off, and write about it. And may affect policy.

Our erratic press reflects the class bias of its publishers, but it is not a government-run press. It is finally open to the tumultuous currents in the real-world America—though often belatedly, after harm has been done, often insufficiently and inconsistently. Which, apart from advocacy of socialism, is why we sorely need the journalism of IN THESE TIMES and other left publications.

Yet, like it or not, it was in our general press that most Americans finally (after shameful throttling of the story by the military and many newspapers) did get to read of My Lai. American journalists finally did blow the whistle in the mass media on Watergate and Nixon. No such possibilities for military and government accountability exist in the USSR.

But the distinction between a closed and open society, by whatever name you care to label the two countries, is of high importance to Americans, including socialists. Our historic open society is very much a part of the possibilities for lessening and eventually ending the domination of the economy by the corporations, the military, and their legislative and administrative tools.

None of this argument is to say: Why do you run articles like Dragsdahl's? Run 'em, and run the replies to them, as you did with that dreadful piece about the

Answers to last week's puzzle:

PCP TOAD GHAT
BIO UNDERRATE
ARROBAS EERIE
ETNAS ZLEM
ELL TRANSIT
BONY KEATS RI
ZID ZRETE GOP
IS ALONE MEN
PERSONS HAS
APSE CASTLE
SATIE MONTAUK
AVERSIONS TRE
MADE ROSA EER

Warsaw ghetto. That's one of the happy differences between ITT and the publications of locked-in sects of the American left.

It is to say that Dragsdahl's treatise was lamentably shallow because it neglected the monumental and dangerous fact that the Soviet Union is a tightly closed society in which the people learn only what their leaders want them to learn.

Dragsdahl may have decided to avoid joining the anti-Soviet hawks with criticism of the USSR which Americans get in great volume in any case. But in writing about all the American books that Russians can read (Hedrick Smith's *The Russians*, perhaps?), the least he owed the reader, if not his own journalistic peace of mind, was another little fact: The Soviet people cannot read books by their own writers if they are critical of their own establishment. Let alone books by Russians that meticulously document the thought-control incarceration of dissenters, in or out of the psychiatric wards.

Having been in four of the Eastern European countries, I am ready to offer this generalization: There is a universal corrosive cynicism in the "satellites," where they know they are dominated by the Russians. But in the big dominating country itself, though people have many negative feelings about their economy and bureaucracy, and may grumble (as do Americans) about conditions, the Russians are a proud, assertive and simplistically self-righteous people.

World history offers ample evidence of the dangers in a marriage of ignorance and self-righteousness.

Making this somber point is not to shrug off the need and possibilities of our getting along with the Russians, or to disregard the awesome responsibility of Washington to take a major initiative in that direction. Nefarious CIA activities around the world and nuclear bases on Soviet borders were not inventions of Russian paranoids. There is still an amazing American arrogance about our right to do things to others which we would find impermissible if done to us. The U-2 was one example. There is no Russian-run "Radio Free America" operating in Mexico or Canada. But we run Radio Free

Europe, beamed eastward from Germany, of all intolerable places.

A case can be made to explain the Russian military intervention in Eastern Europe, its military secrecy, accelerated arms program, even the hair-raising Brezhnev Doctrine of the selective right of aggression, as the reaction to Soviet history as a beleaguered island in a virulently hostile world. To make the obvious point that this rationale has worn thin in a changing world doesn't prove that it is not still the mainspring in the thinking of the Russian leaders.

But a case can also be made—and is being made for the first time by some Americans who are far from hawks—of genuine fear of Soviet intentions. Or at least strong uneasiness.

Intent is becoming the new magic word.

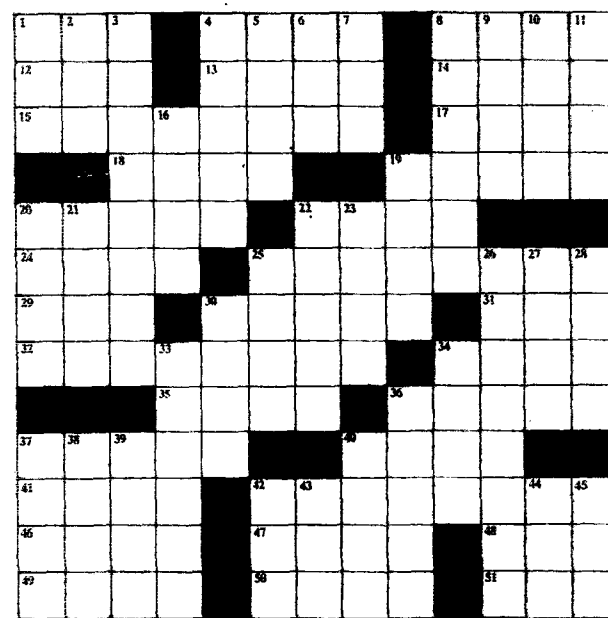
In a world that can be virtually wiped out by thermonuclear exchange, can one believe there is, literally, an American capitalist plot to destroy the Soviet Union? It defies reason. Even if one grants the insatiable drive for economic domination by our multinational corporations, and the basic insanity of the nuclear arms race itself. Nor can I believe that the Soviets intend (or ever intended) to destroy this country. Ideology? I agree with those who believe that ideology, like nostalgia, ain't what it used to be. (Have you observed the caliber of Russian and Chinese "Marxists" helming their idiocies at each other in the UN?)

The Soviet leaders may be tough and stubborn and peasant-shrewd, but they are, after all, leftover Stalin sycophants. They are basically limited, super-conservative, nationalistic, defense-minded and slightly paranoid, with about the same intellectual grasp of the world and people's movements as, say, Gen. Westmoreland and Dean Rusk. This doesn't mean they may not be dangerous. It does mean that they should respond in good ways to a lessening of their fears and suspicions. Good ways for world peace, if not necessarily for your idea or my idea of what Russian socialism ought to be. That's their own Byzantine business. We can't preach too much. We have some failed dreams to work on right here.

—Lester Rodney

Variations of Cygni

By Jay Shepherd



ACROSS

- 1 Chicken _____ king
- 4 Hay unit
- 8 Timbre
- 12 Sneaky one
- 13 Nautical term
- 14 Andy's partner
- 15 More posh
- 17 Religious ceremony
- 18 Court, at one time
- 19 Garden bloomer
- 20 Gather
- 22 Greek portico
- 24 Spring holiday
- 25 Famed ballet
- 29 Word with melting
- 30 Sort
- 31 _____ Abner of cartoon fame
- 32 Final act
- 34 Italian city
- 35 Italian noble family
- 36 Flood

- 37 Andes dweller, once
- 40 Red item
- 41 Chimneysweep's bane
- 42 Swimmer's challenge
- 46 Academic reading
- 47 Cashier's stamp
- 48 Melody
- 49 Corker
- 50 Science's counterpart
- 51 Wheedle

DOWN

- 1 _____ longa, vita brevis
- 2 Order's partner
- 3 Greek heroine
- 4 Makes cookies
- 5 Dismounted
- 6 Robert E. _____
- 7 Poetic contraction
- 8 Relating to the foot
- 9 Leave out
- 10 Word with half
- 11 Belgian river (var.)
- 16 Bird's habitat
- 19 Super
- 20 Swiss range
- 21 Kitten's remark
- 22 Pearls should not be thrown to them
- 23 Astronaut's beverage
- 25 Token milieu
- 26 Certain Frenchman
- 27 Actress Eartha
- 28 Playwright Wiesel
- 30 Org.
- 33 More organized
- 34 Mimicked
- 36 Posts
- 37 Ratio words
- 38 "High _____"
- 39 "_____ all ye faithful..."
- 40 Lure
- 42 Baden, for one
- 43 Event of 1812
- 44 By way of
- 45 Unit of work

Discrimination

Continued from page 8.

Kaiser/USWA plan was put in place in the absence of such official finding against the corporation at Gramercy.

Weber applied for the crafts-retraining program during the first year of the new affirmative action plan in 1974. Based on company records admitted as evidence during court hearings, at the end of 1974 there were 293 craft employees at the Gramercy plant. Of that number, and including the first trainees accepted under the new 50-50 requirement that excluded Weber, 13 were black. In 1973, before the affirmative action program was initiated, blacks numbered five out of a total of 273. Forty percent of the residents in that part of Louisiana are black.

Before the retraining program, with seniority and prior experience the primary factors of eligibility, blacks particularly were unable to enter the skilled crafts. Most blacks were not hired before 1969 and therefore lacked seniority, and few had previous experience because of systematic exclusion from similar jobs not only in Louisiana but across the South.

Isidore Booker is a member of USWA Local 13000, and works for Kaiser at its Chalmette operation approximately 45 miles from the Gramercy plant. Booker, who is also president of the West Bank branch of the NAACP in Jefferson Parish, has worked for Kaiser since 1952. "Until the mid-'50s," Booker told *IN THESE TIMES*, "blacks could only be hired for two job categories, laborer and janitor. Whites hired as laborers were paid a higher wage than blacks doing the same work."

"When we finally were allowed to transfer into other departments, seniority was counted on a department basis, not plant-wide. To transfer out of a segregated department meant you would lose your seniority and take a cut in pay." According to Booker, facilities such as lunchrooms and restrooms remained segregated at the plant where he works until the late '60s.

Earlier suit wins affirmative action.

Unlike at Gramercy, a suit was filed at the Chalmette plant. A black employee by the name of Harris Parson charged the Kaiser Corp. with discrimination in reference to promotion into a supervisory position. After a federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission investigation verified the charge, Parson and another black employee filed suit in federal court in 1967. The suit was subsequently broadened into a class action and in 1973 the federal district court ruled against the charge.

But in July, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, the same court that upheld the Weber charge of reverse discrimination at Gramercy, ordered the district court to rehear the Parson suit charging discrimination on the part of Kaiser at Chalmette. In ordering the rehearing the Fifth Circuit Court stated that in light of the statistical under-representation of blacks in the skilled crafts jobs at Chalmette, "the burden of proof is on Kaiser" to show that the company's employment procedures did not discriminate or reinforce preferential patterns. In the Weber suit, however, there was no black, other minority or female testimony on the question of discrimination at the Gramercy plant.

The Kaiser Corporation, defending itself against the Weber suit, did not and could not admit prior discriminatory practices against women and minorities. Such an admission could leave the company open to a new wave of Title VII suits from female and black employees, possibly jeopardize lucrative federal contracts and generate additional bad publicity.

Corporations operating under court-ordered consent decree affirmative action plans would not be affected by the Weber decision no matter what way it goes. But Kaiser and other corporations with similar voluntary programs tying up millions of dollars, are watching the situation nervously. The next move is the Supreme Court's.

SUGAR DADDY WELCH

Continued from page 24.

as his national security advisor. In the end, Welch argues, we have an Insiders-sponsored, communist sympathizer whispering into the President's ear.

Since so much of the Birch Society has been closely tied with Welch himself, for years members worried about the Society's future after his death. But Welch now happily claims there are many capable successors. "The question is always, how fast can you go. If you go too far ahead you don't get anybody but screwballs to come in. But we've been able to get some of the top people in the business world, education, and so forth, because we've shown some judgment and focus, and we're outspoken. We're looking forward to being a very effective influence for a generation, or, maybe centuries, to come."

Another shrewd move, with an eye to the future, was the establishment of JBS summer camps for 14-22 year olds. In what amounts to a minor league farm system for producing new talent, 11 camps across the country administer a week's worth of political vaccinations, Birch-style, to over 2,000 kids.

John McManus explains, "It's a solid week of instruction and fun. Kids aren't

stupid and we want to give them the meat to chew on." Camp seminars vary from "The U.N., Get U.S. Out," to "What Is Communism?" And 80 percent of those attending eventually become members. Already there is a smattering of young staffers visible at Birch headquarters, themselves products of earlier camps.

Deficit spending.

Another strength has been the Society's ability to remain solvent. As recently as 1971 they were \$2.5 million in debt, but a special effort by their field staff raised the money and more in under four months.

"We're always trying to do more than we can," Welch comments. "More than we had the money for and hoped we could get." He neglects, however, to mention the irony in their own deficit spending, for one of their chief gripes has been that Uncle Sam doesn't watch his purse strings closely enough.

Even those in academic circles have come to have a grudging respect for the Birch Society. Donald Price, of Harvard University's government department, says, "The Birch Society does not swing any great political muscle. But people are becoming aware that government in this country has bitten off more than it can

chew, like welfare."

He continues, "And a movement that attacks with an almost religious ardor in the form of deeply conservative politics is bound to attract a lot of support."

Also, Prof. Peter Natchez of Brandeis University's politics department, suggests the JBS is on the upswing. "One of the remarkable things about American politics is a substantial growth of right-wing opinion that is not necessarily represented in voting trends. The causes of anti-government feeling should not be underestimated."

"If the Birch Society gets any sort of intelligent leadership," Natchez continued, "they could have a mass market. Their potential is probably underestimated and is growing, not diminishing."

On a Friday night in a Boston suburb, a dozen Birch members attend a typical information and action meeting. They begin by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance before sitting down to watch a Birch film-strip on the evil roots of inflation. Later, they adjourn to the dining room table to write letters. Each member is to compose 15 letters to various elected officials, prodding them to vote a certain way on an upcoming issue.

Before the night is over this group will produce 180 letters; over 12 months they'll send off nearly 3,000, and if multiplied by 3,500 chapters nationally.... Like the tortoise, the Society grinds it out, quietly, but steadily.

Barry Stavro is a journalist who contributes to *ITT* from Boston.

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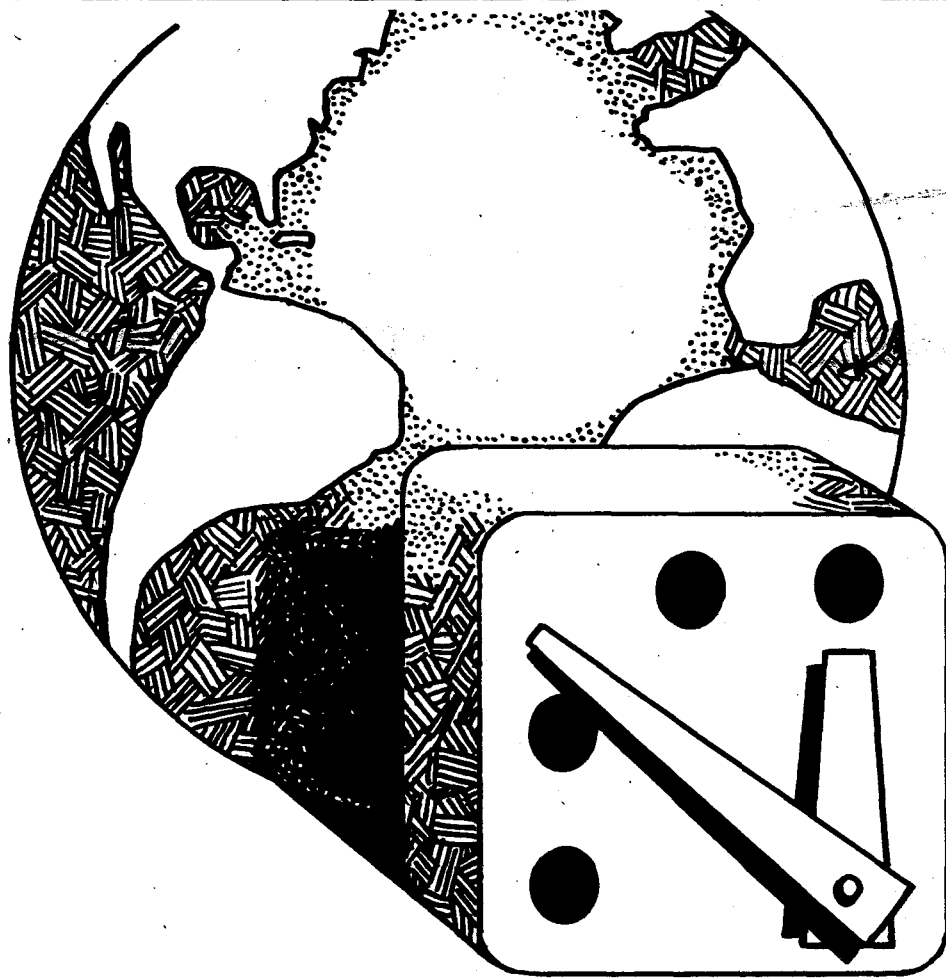
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LIFE IN THE U.S.

By Ike Henry Gittlen

RESPONDING TO THE PROBLEM of imported steel, the American Basic Steel Industry and the United Steelworkers of America signed a unique agreement, that outlawed a strike during the 1973 negotiations. The experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) has been twice extended to preclude strikes over industry-wide bargaining issues through the 1980 contract talks, and has created an early-start negotiating pattern that requires binding arbitration of unresolved national issues.

The possibility of a steel strike every three years, the industry felt, triggered a stockpiling binge among domestic steel users, which in turn encouraged purchase of foreign steel. Alarmed at the steady increase of imports into this country, the industry wanted to eliminate the union's strike option in order to stabilize the industry. Uninterrupted production, industry claimed, would halt import gains, assure American dominance of the domestic market, and ensure steelworkers' jobs. In return for their cooperation, steelworkers were promised a new industry attitude. Somehow the fear of imports would change divergent interests and inbred obstinancy.

The agreement drew praise from government and the press. Union leaders were retitled "labor statesmen," industry officials became modern, sophisticated, visionary and pioneering. A cloak of utopian idealism was thrown around the ENA and its support became patriotic.

Now, five years later, we know that the ENA failed to reduce the flow of imports, and the era of mutual respect never materialized at the plant level. Union officials are backing away from ENA as they hear increasing dissent from the ranks.

The ENA has resulted in the near collapse of the grievance procedure, channeled the union into a negotiation policy that is not sensitive to the needs of its members, and has created a conspiracy of silence between company and union officials with regard to the industry's own complicity in the import dilemma.

The steel industry grievance procedure provides for three plant-level appeal steps and one corporation-level review prior to arbitration. This system is, at best, cumbersome and frustrating. A typical case, resolved by an arbitrator, takes over two years. The procedure can work only when the company respects the Union's ability to back its position.

Contract gains lost.

With the signing of ENA, a tremendous disrespect for contract rights has developed among plant management. This has resulted in a sharp increase in the number of obvious contract violations. Since the very same people who are purposely violating the agreement sit at the grievance table there are few settlements in the lower steps of the procedure. Some local grievance officials are compromising or withdrawing large numbers of grievances to hide the impotency of the system in the face of these massive violations. Locals that refuse to yield under the pressure have developed extreme backlogs on their arbitration dockets. One local in southeastern Pennsylvania has over 200 cases pending arbitration.

During the 1977 contract sound-off sessions, local delegates demanded grievance procedure improvements. In response, the international union, true to ENA form, created a top level Company-Union Grievance Review Committee to oversee the system and intervene at extreme problem plants.

The fallacy of this approach is that the companies have always had an opportunity in the fourth step to correct the abuses of lower-level management. The fact that they have allowed arbitration dockets to flood over indicates approval of their subordinates' actions. The increased dependence on arbitration may be the most serious failure of ENA.

FROM THE SHOP FLOOR

Steel companies haven't ironed out workplace wrinkles



The people in steel say they want to work to live, not live to work.

Another source of growing discontent with ENA lies in its pursuit of monetary contract gains at the expense of rights that govern the quality of life on and off the job.

The ENA's most obvious success has been in wage-related benefits. Each ENA contract has produced good wage improvements, increased health and pension packages, and a new group of guaranteed provisions for steelworkers with 20 or more years seniority.

But while monetary gains are an essential part of every contract, steelworkers are also concerned with increasing management power at the shop level. It has become clear that ENA is swapping job protection for money.

For example, the ENA has created or increased many penalties on management actions. The companies pay extra when they work men on holidays, change schedules in the middle of a week, and work off daylight turns. The theory is that these so-called fines will curtail these actions. In practice, however, they only legalize and justify the act. Thus management feels free to operate on holidays as long as they pay double time and a half, and they now consider it their right to change a schedule at mid-week after a four-hour penalty is tendered. The question in steelworkers' minds is whether the company should be banned from some of these practices and forced to seek volunteers for others.

Family men know that a missing father at Christmas cannot be compensated with cash. Steelworkers have enough problems planning ahead with "agreed-to schedules," let alone contending with mid-week changes. The sentiment is best expressed when the men say they want to work to live, not live to work.

There have been similar adverse effects from an ENA-negotiated contracting-out clause. As the wages of craft steel-

workers rose over the years, the companies found it cheaper to contract out much of the major repair and construction work that used to be performed by "in-house" employees. The ENA's new clause on this subject calls for wage payments to any worker who can perform work being done by an outside contractor, while that worker is laid off or working at a lower-paying job. This is firm protection for present employees. But, as the men see the once healthy rigger, painter, bricklayer, pipefitter and electrical crews dwindle through attrition, they realize the union has allowed the companies to cut jobs and circumvent the hard-won union wage scale by contracting out. The only way to preserve these jobs is to regulate the craft crew size and demand rights to the work.

It is with some shame that we watched the sell-off of new hire rights during the past two ENA contracts. In 1973, the probationary period of 30 days, during which a new employee can be fired without reason or recourse, was extended to 520 hours (approximately three months). Then in 1977, the package of health insurance, that used to cover from date of hire, was withheld until a worker completed his or her probationary period. The companies wanted these longer provisions because they were handcuffed by federal hiring codes that curtailed discrimination at the point of employment. My plant has used the longer probationary period to trump up poor work records on non-preferred people and fire them for incompetency.

This relaxation of union job protections extends into the areas of productivity, safety and discipline control. There is a growing conviction that the ENA cannot curtail management in the quality of life area. As the gap widens between the workforce's desire for more job protections and the companies' flexibility in

these areas, the membership is leaning away from ENA's monetary glitter.

Support of import strategy.

The ENA seems to include an unwritten clause that insists on unconditional union acceptance and support of the steel industry's import strategy. What has emerged is a narrow set of allegations and solutions that side-step any mention of the industry's own complicity in its present shaky state.

The companies tell us that foreign producers are guilty of unfair trade practices, government pollution control regulations are too stringent, capital depreciation allowances are not generous enough, and so on.

I do not mean to say that these are not valid problems, but rather that it is an incomplete analysis. There are some faulty management practices regarding levels of reinvestment, maintenance and salaried staff size and compensation that have severely limited the industry's ability to compete.

Union leaders know of these problems but only echo the industry's self-serving viewpoint. Because of this, the companies have not been forced to confront their own shortcomings.

The sad truth is that the industry's story has gone unchallenged for so long that the companies believe their own fiction.

A case in point: For many years, my department (an electric furnace shop) has followed two distinct management policies. All foremen are urged to operate the furnaces in a reckless fashion to get the highest ton-per-hour rate possible and all maintenance is of the patch-and-go variety so that "down time" is minimized. The furnaces are in a sad mechanical state and suffer an increasing number of small delays. Recently, the foremen took some bad risks and two major breakdowns resulted. These repairs, along with the chronic short delays, made for several months of sub-standard production.

The amazing thing was that our superintendent blamed the poor production on a "lack of zip in some people's attitudes." He also stated that our alleged morale problem was similar to attitude deficiencies that he claimed had forced a sister department at the Lackawanna plant to shut down. There was, in fact, a similarity between our problems and those at Lackawanna. Both management staffs insisted on running the equipment into the ground.

The workers in my department answered the superintendent with a letter of their own. In effect, they told him to look in the mirror. Unfortunately, steel industry management has never learned to listen to its employees.

Return to adversary roles.

In general, the ENA has distorted the adversary roles of union and management. The union agreed to this in only limited areas such as import policy and labor relations stability. However, the cooperation on these fronts could not be contained. The union now finds itself unable properly to defend its membership through the grievance procedure, pursue a negotiating policy that would improve the amount and quality of steelworkers' off-job hours, or protect its membership from the consequences of an import position it helped promote.

The union must now untangle itself from the ENA and return to its proven, if unpleasant, adversary role. The longer we allow the companies to tramp over us the less respect the membership has for the union. This forces workers to rely on the good graces of the company or hope for a favorable arbitrator while seriously weakening the union.

In short no one's playing the ENA game anymore but us. It's time we put away our dreams and illusions and return to reality.

Ike Gittlen has worked as a steelworker in Steelton, Pa.

MEDIA

Jimmy Carter labors with the press

By Pat Strandt

WASHINGTON, D. C.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE THE labor press has been to the White House. The International Labor Press Association, whose members are AFL-CIO union publications all over the U.S. and Canada, last made the trip as a group shortly before Lyndon Johnson decided not to run again.

So it was a surprise to get a call Aug. 4 that the ILPA board, all 15 of us, was being invited to the White House for a press conference with Jimmy Carter on Aug. 18. It would be Carter's nod to Labor Day.

Many of my friends, other labor editors, gave me a hard time when I told them I was going with the crowd to see what it was all about.

"You're going to shake that bloody hand?" they asked me.

I told them yes, because most of them had already been to the White House, and I hadn't. And I shook the bloody hand.

Before trotting across Lafayette Park to the White House, a high AFL-CIO official came in to the AFL-CIO building in Washington about an hour before we were to leave, and briefed us on the relationship between the labor federation and the administration. Then, about 15 minutes before we were to leave, we went around the table to find out what the questions were. We had a lot of good ones. We decided, tactically, to let our first questioner be one of the few who planned to open with something nice to say. That was Jerry Archuleta of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers' Union, Denver, Colo. Archuleta told us he planned to praise Carter for the appointment of Ray Marshall as U.S. Secretary of Labor and Dr. Eula Bingham as Assistant Secretary for OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Marshall and Bingham are almost universal labor-union favorites.

Then, Archuleta said, he planned to zero in on the weakening of the cotton dust standards, an administration position labor has decried, and similar moves to put some health-and-safety standards in abeyance because the administration thinks they might be "inflationary."

A trip to the White House.

When we got to the desk inside the Executive Office Building, that old rococo pile just west of the White House on the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 17th Street, we showed our drivers' licenses or other identification to the guard, who crossed our names off a typed sheet he had, and got a clip-on, dogeared, orange identification badge from him.

Then, shepherded by a public relations man from the Labor Department, we went into another room, with folding chairs, where we were briefed on the rules of such an event. Two of us had brought cameras, which we had been told was okay. I left my tape recorder with my luggage, since that was *verboten*. "We used to allow tape recorders," said Pat Bario, a White House press aide who used to work for the late Sen. Philip Hart of Michigan, "but they made a racket with people turning them on and off and flipping the cassettes and fussing with them—four or five of them on a table—so we just don't allow them anymore. Besides, you'll get a transcript."

I, for one, had been surprised to find the total time set aside for us was 30 minutes. We wouldn't get far in interpreting the labor movement to President Carter in that period, much as the AFL-CIO spokesman indicated it might be good to try.

We were told that we'd be meeting in the Cabinet room, and that those of us with cameras could take pictures during the 90 seconds press photographers and TV networks were allowed in to do this,



When President Carter met the labor press, photographers and the TV networks were allowed into his office for 90 seconds before the meeting began. After the 30-minute session, each person was photographed with Carter as a memento.

The AFL-CIO press was invited to the White House for the first time since Johnson decided not to run.

at the start of the meeting. It was customary to rise when the President came in, Bario said. Then, when it was all over, we would each have our picture taken with the President.

"Don't try to get one last question in then," she warned us. If we did, we'd be taking a chance on killing the whole scheme under which Carter has met with many other such special-interest groups as ours, under the same circumstances.

Then out of the building, past parking spaces marked for, among others, the Vice President, and into the west wing of the White House itself. Down a hall and into what seemed a rather small yet comfortable room with an oval table, lots of big leather chairs around it, and battered tinny ashtrays along its length. The view from the windows, we were told, was of the Rose Garden.

"How many of you have been in this room before?" Bario asked us, like a kindly schoolteacher. One of us raised a hand. Someone mentioned that the chairs had tags on the back giving the positions held by their usual occupants. Someone told me mine had "Secretary of Defense" on the back. Bario told us that Cabinet members could take the chairs with them when they left the Cabinet, if they paid the government \$700 for them.

What's a safe chair?

Soon, the door opened and Carter came briskly in. Smaller and slighter than I had thought—looking pale and tired, too—ready for that two-week vacation he would take as soon as he was through with us.

An attempt at a joke: "I hope I am not interrupting your meeting."

We laughed nervously and politely.

"Have you had a nice day so far?" the President asked.

He didn't wait for an answer, but began immediately to tell us how unemployment has decreased since he's been President, and how it has been "a very gratifying experience." He spoke of the conference report between the House and Senate on deregulation of natural gas, the night before. "We still have a very tough battle on our hands to get this legislation approved by the House and Senate and implemented into law," he said.

A little more on this, then a quick segue into civil service reform legislation, and the possibility of changing Kennedy's Executive Order allowing federal employees to bargain collectively into a law.

Unfortunately, none of us at the table happened to represent federal employees.

At any rate, then to questions. As planned Archuleta was first.

The answer, the first to the five questions we as a group managed to ask, was meticulously worded and lengthy. It told us a lot more than seemed necessary about the subject. Carter said he thought the "previous administration got bogged down in sometimes frivolous and ridiculous writing of rules and regulations that not only did not protect the workers adequately, but turned the general public and the employer against the program itself."

"They had spent too much time trying to write descriptions of what a safe chair might be or what a safe ladder might be or a safe handrail. And if you took this whole group and spent a week, you couldn't write all the characteristics of what is a safe ladder or chair," Carter said.

(I thought of the members of our union who have been badly injured in falls from unsafe ladders, or shocked on metal ones, and the efforts the union has made to help the government write just those descriptions of what safe tools might be.)

"We have not backed off at all on the quality of protection of the workers' health in breathing air with cotton dust in it," Carter continued. "At the same time, we have cut down tremendously on the potential cost of these regulations. The workers are pleased, the Department itself is pleased, and the employers are able, I think, now to take the corrective action without having to close down plants."

(All those groups may or may not be pleased, but not the union representing the textile workers, which has been screaming bloody murder about the weakening of those standards.)

"So, to summarize," Carter went on: "This is better for the workers, it is better for the employers, it is better for our overall economy, and I think it arouses support from the American public."

Next question was on Carter's health-care plan. The questioner was Don Stillman from the Auto Workers, which is screaming bloody murder because Carter's health plan is not the one he promised UAW president Douglas Fraser and AFL-CIO president George Meany as recently as April.

Carter told us, again at length, about the difficulties, as he saw them, of getting a one-shot bill, such as that proposed by

Sen. Edward Kennedy, through Congress. "The special interest groups, the medical profession, and the hospital associations are so intense and effective in their lobbying effort to protect their enormous and unwarranted profits that they prevail in the absence of a common American interest."

Time runs out.

The next question, from a representative of the Retail Clerks union, was on the rising cost of food. "I must say that we were very disturbed that Barry Bosworth singled out our industry and told the Food Market Institute that he would monitor our negotiations closely," the unionist explained. "Naturally, we were happy last week to hear that Mr. Bosworth was not speaking for the administration and that pronouncements about collective bargaining would henceforth be coordinated by the top-level committee." The questioner asked Carter to comment about "the inflationary factors that have an impact on food prices, especially such ones as imports, grain and cattle supplies, and energy?"

Carter singled out energy as "the most serious long-range threat to our economy," and noted that during the last six years, "our energy imports have increased more than 800 percent, an almost unbelievable amount." He also cited the weather, and noted that although food prices went up 18½ percent during the first six months of this year, his economists expect them to rise more slowly now.

I can't believe my watch, time's nearly up. I check the watch of the editor across the table from me. It's the same. When Carter looks up, sweetly, in his monologue and tells us, apropos of dealing with inflation and raising heifers and whatall, "I am a farmer," I'm ready to shout in frustration, "No you're not, Mr. Carter, you're our President!"

But I don't. I wave my hand for what, it turns out, is the last question. He nods at me, and the editor next to me is faster and says, "Mr. President...."

It's all over except the parade around the table to shake hands and have a picture taken. What can I say? Well, to be exact, all I said was "Thank you," with a sincere smile, and circled the table, being sure to pick up my notepad with "The White House" on the top, as a souvenir. The pencil, too.

Pat Strandt has been an editor in the labor movement for 20 years.

Peru heads right

Continued from page 10.

vote in the coming election. To symbolize the tragedy, former President Velasco died on the operating table in Lima on Christmas Eve. On Dec. 26, despite the regime's refusal to allow the peasantry to come down from the mountains to pay homage, over 200,000 people escorted the former president to his grave.

Working class leaders.

Velasco's death may have marked the end of the 1968 Revolt of the Colonels and Peru's hopes for a capitalist revolution, but not the end of the Peruvian people's revolution. Since the July 1977 strike, working class leaders have taken the helm of the movement.

In January the military regime was spared a second general strike only when Communist leader Jorge del Prado agreed to Morales Bermudez's personal handwritten note requesting last minute negotiations. This, in turn, precipitated an open split of the party into two factions.

The more radical wing, the PCP-majority then joined the *Comando Unitario de Lucha* (CUL), which united miners, three of the four national labor confederations, the teachers federation, some Maoist and Trotskyist-led unions, the Revolutionary Communist Party and the active *Vanguardia Revolucionaria*.

In 1978, events began to move more quickly.

•February 27-28, the second general strike in six months forced Morales Bermudez to swallow his threats to outlaw the national labor federation, the CGTP.

•In March, Lima's municipal workers also won a wage hike and Morales Bermudez was forced to end right-wing control over the Interior ministry and over a major Lima daily newspaper, *La Prensa*.

•To continue to meet the IMF's demands, he was also forced to dismiss the ministers of industry and finance, relying on Foreign Minister Jose de la Puente Rabbill to get a deferment of the elimina-

In spite of fierce repression, leftists won a third of the assembly seats.

tion of basic food subsidies until June 6, two days after the scheduled election, so that riots would not force a cancellation of the voting.

•Manufacturers Hanover and Citibank agreed to a 90-day extension of debt payments. But after three weeks a default on loans from Wells Fargo Bank was avoided only by a last-minute payment from Occidental Petroleum. The new Finance minister Javier Silva Ruete was so doubtful that the New York steering committee of bankers would ratify the loan extension that he decided to try to improve the regime's chances by immediately introducing further austerity measures.

•On May 15, prices doubled overnight for milk, rose on bread and staples, on gasoline from 53¢ to 89¢ a gallon, on cooking oil from 57¢ to \$1.31 a liter; overall, price hikes ranged from 30 to 120 percent in a country where most workers are paid the minimum wage of \$30 a month. People were crying in Lima supermarkets the next morning.

•Demonstrations by women in provincial towns sparked riots in 28 cities and, despite a plea by Morales Bermudez on TV, triggered still another general strike on May 22 and May 23 in the central and southern parts of the country.

•After the military killed 38 people and injured scores more, Morales Bermudez reinstituted his hated curfew, hindering workers' nighttime organizing for the month before the election, which was postponed for two weeks. Then the military returned to the offensive.

•Leftist weeklies, including the popu-

lar *Marka*, were again banned, and the peasant confederation, the CNA, a remnant of the Velasco era, was dissolved by decree and its leader, Avelino Mar Arias, a leading PSR candidate, was arrested. Seventy-seven leaders of the teachers' union, SUTEP, were put on trial as agitators of student unrest, while 68 political opponents of the regime, including 40 teachers, were sent to El Sepa, the regime's jungle penal colony.

•SINAMOS officials were also criticized publicly by the junta and one of its leaders, Jose Luis Alvarado, was deported along with 14 other leftist candidates, editors and trade union leaders to Argentina, where they were detained in the Argentine junta's mountain infantry base at Jujuy. Among the 14 were the UDP and FOCEP's important leaders, including Ricardo Letts and Hugo Blanco (who in *absentia* polled the most votes for the left) and the PSR's three top leaders, former SINAMOS head Gen. Leonidas Rodriguez Figueroa, and retired admirals Guillermo Faura Gaig and Jose Arce Larco.

While making things very difficult for the left, the regime did not go all the way and ban left parties from the elections. Fearful of international displeasure, the junta even allowed balloting for deported left candidates, using the elections as a smokescreen for political repression designed to isolate the left.

But the result was surprising for the military: one-third of the seats of the constituent assembly were still won by leftists. Future elections bode even worse for the military: two million illiterates, many of them poor and supporters of the left, are scheduled to vote in coming elections. And the left, despite its differences, is united in its opposition to the regime's austerity measures.

Shadow of the military.

Invariably, then, the focus returns to the issue no mere election can resolve: payments on Peru's huge foreign debt, now amounting to \$8 billion. If the regime's appeals for patriotism and austerity to meet the \$4.8 billion public debt are getting little support from the left, neither

is it getting any economic initiative to meet the country's \$3.4 billion commercial debt from the right's "strike of capital."

Lima's conservative *Sociedad de Industrias* ignores the regime's pleas for confidence in the economy and some investment beyond real estate speculation. The former leaders of the landed oligarchy are content to just sit, count their money, and wait for another "Pinochet-style solution." Their vast haciendas along the Pacific coast and Andean highlands have already been confiscated, but they have received financial compensation from peasants who occupied the estates to form cooperatives.

Today the oligarchs can still lounge in their huge comfortable homes and dine with bankers, industrialists and military brass in the first-class restaurants of Miraflores, Lima's wealthy seaside suburb. There they flourish in the shade of political corruption and watch skyscrapers for private businesses and luxury high-rise apartment buildings mushroom as if there had never been a revolution—and judging from the ragged beggars who dare to bring the countryside's misery into Miraflores' immaculate streets, perhaps there never was.

Of all the generals seen in these circles, the most important to watch is Gen. Pedro Richter Prada, the chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who opposes return to civilian rule. Richter is expected to become the next Prime Minister when Gen. Oscar Molina Pallocheta retires next year. At that time Richter and other rightists will be banking on their U.S.-trained officer corps to forcibly prevent any gains by the left either before or after any return to civilian rule. Richter is aware, even if APRA's Haya de la Torre and AP's former president Balaunde Terry are not, that elections designed to change only the form of conservative rule cannot turn the clock back to pre-revolutionary 1968. The lifting of the curfew for the balloting revealed that APRA's moderating role can only thrive under the ominous shadow of the military power.

Gerard Colby is the author of *DuPont: The Nylon Curtain*. He lived in Peru.

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ART & ENTERTAINMENT



Director Robert Altman leads an unwieldy cast through a series of unappealing discoveries.

FILM

Wedding breaches promise

A WEDDING

Directed by Robert Altman
Twentieth-Century Fox

Robert Altman has always been controversial, because he's so full of contradictions himself. A savage social commentator, he's not at all political. A passionate documenter of American pop culture, he mocks it at the same time. An extravagant improviser, he produces well-organized, consistent films. A rich and influential film entrepreneur, he's also an artist, exploring the meaning of movie myth and romance.

Nashville touched off a storm of discussion about Altman's purpose and filmmaking effect. *Nashville* linked up popular music, politics and violence in one big package. Was the film a powerful cri-

tique of American decadence, or was it cynical exploitation, a facile condemnation of a people whose reality was more complex? The eerie, contextless *3 Women* was not a film to answer any of the questions that *Nashville* raised; there, restless Robert Altman was trying out other ways of expressing alienation.

So *A Wedding* has arrived to uneasy eagerness. It is, however, a disappointing film, a flaccid re-run of other experiments from a man we expect to be constantly moving forward. It lacks the bite, the insight, the anger of other Altman commentaries on American life.

The format is roughly the same as in *Nashville*. A large cast of characters is presented; we see, through their interactions, their

secret desires and fears. These private passions, *Nashville* showed us, could be banal and still engrossing. They showed how show business romance shaped people's hopes, but also how different those characters' lives were from the movie clichés they admired.

In *A Wedding*, the dilettante son of a socialite and an Italian entrepreneur marries the daughter of a trucker-turned-trucking-magnate. The movie opens with the last guest's car leaving the high society estate after the reception. In between, a collection of family secrets gets spilled, and several disasters happen.

The revelations unfold rapidly after the ceremony. At the reception's outset, the *grande dame* (Lillian Gish) dies; family members keep the secret from each

other, but everybody knows. The bride's sister tells the groom she's pregnant by him. A socialite mother shoots up in the bathroom, while a socialist aunt unveils a nude painting of the bride. A long-lost brother appears unexpectedly, but hardly any of the invited guests do. A tornado and a car-truck crash also figure in the events.

A formal wedding would seem to be an excellent situation to reveal the strains of all-American daily life. It's not just that rites of passage condense daily arrangements. In such a militantly casual society, people are likely to be awkward in their formal selves, and to let slip more than they mean to.

Sounds good, but it doesn't work here, because Altman's purpose in stripping down his characters is unclear. The people we meet are not, in the main, worth knowing. Their secrets are tiresome, their reactions formulaic. Altman's careful eye for Americana seems to be directed here to capturing, not real ordinary people's behavior, but clichés from television sitcoms.

It's not that real people don't often talk in clichés, or get themselves into hackneyed situations. In past films Altman has acknowledged the soap opera of normal living, while granting sincerity of intent to his characters. He has been cruelly good at creating lovable, if ultimately foolish characters like the gamblers and girls of *California Split*, the would-be hustler McCabe, the bumbling detective of *The Long Goodbye*, the starstruck stripper of *Nashville*. In *A Wedding*, though, we can't even like the characters enough to care that their aspirations are trite and empty.

In part, the problem is one of editing. The film, still over two hours long, has undergone surgery, and we are short some necessary information. Only if you're very quick, for instance, is it clear that the wild woman Viveca Lindfors plays is the cateress. And an episode with the cook's family easily glides by without our correctly identifying any of the characters.

But the movie's failure is more basic. Both situations and characters are drawn to be trite, rather than stubbornly individual within a clichéd framework. Joan Twekesbury's skill in sketching

ten-minute-long, quirky but completely believable characters in *Nashville* contrasts clearly with the labored stereotypes that Considine (and two other scammers with Altman) create in *A Wedding*.

The characters remind you of the equitably scattered insults of the Rolling Stones' *Some Girls*. Ethnic, sexual, and class slurs co-exist in a confusion that renders them meaningless. The fact that remarkable performances still emerge is credit to Altman's improvisational style with actors but the characters still can't overcome their situations.

As the last cars round the drive of the estate after the wedding two disappointed women—"happily" married, the other an intense career woman—ponder the meaning of weddings. As they do, a wisp of a Leonard Cohen song drifts across the soundtrack. "...I have tried in my way to be free..."

In this way, American freedom and its ironies in practice get a musical gloss, just as the final chorus summed it up in *Nashville*. But here it doesn't make you think, and it doesn't sum up anything, because the characters never command respect enough. We end up sullen and disappointed as the women on the steps, though (chances) less resigned.

In *A Wedding*, Altman doesn't have the excuse of fine ethnography—of close documentation of Americana—to dodge the charge, most commonly and soundly leveled at him: contempt for his creations.

If he weren't, in other films, so painfully good at documenting our attempts to create culture out of commerce, the cold clumsiness of *A Wedding* wouldn't even be remarkable. After all, it's no worse, as a movie, than any of a handful of silly comedies passed off as an evening's entertainment in the last six months. If it reduces, just like any of them, American mores to pratfalls in the white upper middle class, it also gives us more vivid acting than we are usually allowed.

But Altman wants to do more than reproduce movie clichés. He also wants to comment on them. And *A Wedding* never gives us more than the stereotypes we know too well.

—Pat Aufderheide

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TELEVISION

NBC'S *W.E.B.* weaves deceit

W.E.B.
NBC
10:00 (EST) Thurs.

It's nothing new to be insulted by a network television show. Any medium designed to be so simple that even 50 million children can watch it (which results in the bulk of its output being so simple-minded that *only* a child could enjoy it), is frequently going to be more irritating to anyone with sense.

Still, there's something even more infuriating than usual about *W.E.B.*, a show that purportedly exposes the seamy "truth" about the television industry. In actual fact, *W.E.B.* tells neither more nor less truth about TV biz than *Starsky and Hutch* tells about cops or *Laverne and Shirley* about brewery workers. What is insidious about this new NBC entry is that it is such conscious bullshit.

In *Network*, Paddy Chayefsky lampooned the poobahs of the TV business with exaggeration. As unreal as was Faye Dunaway's character, everyone I know in the television industry laughed at her statistic-shrieking orgasm. (The possible exception to that is Lin Bolen, on whom the Dunaway character was supposedly based, and who purportedly created *W.E.B.* in revenge.)

In *W.E.B.*, Bolen and NBC have surgically stripped away the human beings beneath the caricatures, reducing their frailties to one-dimensional cartoons and superimposing them on cardboard actors. The resulting portrayal is just as misleading as a lollipop-and-bunny version of the TV business would have been. Each character in *W.E.B.* is instantly identifiable by his/her fatal flaw or cardinal virtue, and that single trait is all we're ever allowed to see.

Hence, we get The Drunk, The Vicious Bastard, The High-Handed Owner, The Frustrated Veteran, The Washed-Up Newsmen, The Temperamental Artist and, of course, The Noble Heroine Struggling to Make Her Way in The High-Powered Man's World of Network Television. Chinese revolutionary opera was never more stylized than this.

And believable? Picture this from episode one:

The network is in trouble. A month before a new season is scheduled to open with a mammoth 30-hour, \$30 million documentary series called *Our America*, the network president freaks out: *Our America* is anti-American, unpatriotic and not a moment of it will run on "his network."

Cut to a long fireplace love scene between the series' *wunderkind* producer and *W.E.B.*'s heroine, the assistant head of daytime programming at the network. They are tenderly celebrating the sixth month of their *amour* when the Vicious Bastard slams in, claiming his job is in jeopardy and threatening the *wunderkind* with broken kneecaps if he can't solve the problem. As he slams out, our flabbergasted heroine turns to stunned *wunderkind* and says "What did you do with *Our America*?"

Wait...hold...moment, moment. Heroine has been clutching with *wunderkind* for six months...six months in which he worked on the most eye-poppingly ambitious project her network has ever undertaken...and she *never* before

thought to ask "By the way, poop-sie, how's it going with the documentary?" Is NBC serious? Am I an idiot or something? Is NBC seriously convinced that I'm an idiot?

W.E.B. started as one woman exec's answer to *Network*.

To pick on that may seem like cavilling (though, take my word, the rest of the show wasn't much closer, especially a volunteer editing crusade that smacked of "I have an editing machine in the basement!" and "Yeah, we can use my dad's old splicer!"), but when the distortions of a mass-adventure medium evolve into lying about your own industry, the smell becomes fierce. It's the difference between Gerald Ford saying that Eastern Europe is not dominated by the Soviets and Richard Nixon saying that his administration had nothing to do with Watergate. One is a blunder, the other is a conscious lie.

It is fashionable in certain circles to picture television executives as a bunch of dumb donkeys who don't know any better. What a

bunch of monkey-gargle. TV execs are, by and large, no less cultured than your average well-paid executive in an urban industry with a sizable "creative end." Most are entirely aware of the deadening, homogenizing effect of their product, but are more skilled than most at a form of sublimation that allows them to find solace in the "numbers" (ratings, demographics and ad sales) and in the Gospel According to Fred Silverman via P.T. Barnum—"We're only giving them what they want."

To promulgate this myth is as self-serving for the industry as for the critics who mouth it. To turn the reality of the industry into a trivial soap opera is no less dishonest than claiming that everything you do is motivated by the public interest.

Before the season started, a lot of talk was bandied about *W.E.B.*—remarks about Bolen's revenge and television exposing itself. *W.E.B.*'s exposure is nothing more or less than a meretricious bag of bullshit that, if anyone out there in what used to be called "Televisionland" has any feelings left to offend, will be consigned to the garbage heap posthaste.

—Eliot Wald
Eliot Wald writes for the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

SOS

By Edward Gold

And these are the generations of Post:

*And the Lord spoke unto Post,
commanding him to minister
unto the health of the Lord's people.
And Post retired into his white barn
and caused to be created
a drink he named Postum
and two cereals he called
Grape Nuts and Elijah's Manna.
But a great hue and cry rose up
among the God-fearing people,
And Post changed Elijah's Manna
to Post Toasties.*

*And it came to pass
that 40% Bran Flakes was born
in the white barn,
and soon became the most chosen
from among all the breakfast foods
in the world,
and the profits were manifold
that the Lord caused to descend
upon his servant, Post.*

*And Post begat Marjorie,
who married Edward Hutton.
Into their fold, they acquired
Jell-o,
Swans Down,
Minute Tapioca,
Franklin Baker Chocolate,
Walter Baker Coconut,
Calumet, La France,
and Maxwell House.
And the Posts prospered,
and soon came to be called
General Foods.*

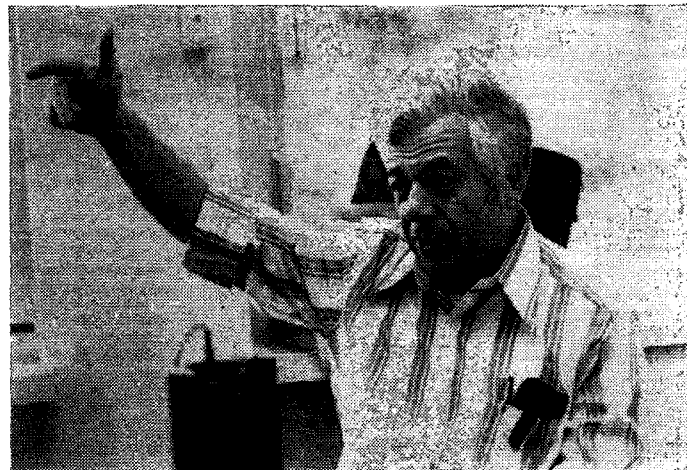
*And during the Great Depression,
the company purchased the patents
of Clarence Birdseye,
of Rosellius for Sanka,
and Kool Aid, with cyclamates.
And SOS
and duly begat Shake'n'Bake,
Cool Whip and Tang,
Maxim and Brim,
and bought out Burger Chef
for the health of the Lord's people,
and today is number one in bubble gum
in all the world
and first in ice cream in Brazil.*

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SUGAR DADDY WELCH STILL SWEET ON AMERICA SOUR ON COMMUNISTS



By Barry Stavro

Like the tortoise, the John Birch Society has a tough shell and has endured a long and hard drubbing, only to steadily plod on. This year, the same extreme right-wing, anti-communist group that in the '60s called for Earl Warren's impeachment, and labeled Dwight Eisenhower a communist, will celebrate its twentieth anniversary.

The Birchers have lasted through six presidential administrations chiefly because of their mettle. There are up to 100,000 Birchers spread across 3,500 chapters and 50 states, with their stronghold in the Rocky Mountain region and California. But throughout, the members exhibit a kind of religious fervor in their beliefs while doggedly pursuing the Society's goals.

It all started in 1958 when Robert Welch, a successful Boston candy manufacturer, gathered together a group of wealthy businessmen for a seminar on the communist threat. From this meeting the JBS was formed, named in honor of the first casualty of the Cold War, a young Baptist missionary killed in China just after World War II ended.

Over the years the Birchers have viewed themselves as an information agency designed to educate the unwitting public about the many layers of "the Communist conspiracy." Their motif has been: Beware, there is a conspiracy at every turn in history and it all ties into the Red Menace.

Essentially, the Birch Society favors a laissez-faire policy—the fewer governmental restrictions the better. They also advocate abolishing NATO, withdrawing from the United Nations, and rescinding

diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union; they oppose the ERA amendment, school busing, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, sex education in school, pornography, gun control, and were against the civil rights movement, arguing its leaders were communists.

This year, the Panama Canal treaty was their major issue. John McManus, the JBS's national PR director, suggested, "What they ought to do with the Panama Canal is pave it over with concrete, infest the area with malaria flies and then give it back to Colombia, who really owns it."

In the '60s the Birchers were similarly outspoken and were inundated with attacks from both the left and fellow conservatives. Welch's most famous offering came in *The Politician*, when he called Dwight Eisenhower, "a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy."

Historian Richard Hofstadter characterized Welch's statement as "bizarre, verbal indiscretions." William F. Buckley bluntly called Welch's theories "paranoid and unpatriotic drivel."

At their nadir in the mid-'60s when membership was dropping off, the Birchers began rebuilding with grass-roots campaigns centered around one issue, which encouraged non-members to join with them. The "Support Your Local Police" campaign was one of the first successful Birch-sponsored groups.

Their current campaign, TRIM, or "tax reform immediately," has in three years spread to over 300 congressional voting districts. Each chapter issues bulletins on their congressmen's voting records and barrage their representatives with letters advocating tax reform. Mc-

Manus explained, "Our strategy is to stimulate enough awareness to be reflected at the polls."

Today the Society is in hearty shape because of superior organizational skills. Its annual \$8 million in expenditures branch out into seven corporations under the Birch mantle, including a publishing house, a network of bookstores, speakers bureau, public research department, syndicated radio and newspaper columns, ad-hoc committees, various periodicals, and even JBS summer camps for students.

Crying "wolf."

The home office of the John Birch Society is in Belmont, Mass. The sedate, ivy-covered brick building flies an enormous Old Glory out front. On the ground floor is an American Opinion bookstore, one of 250 across the country. They sell a smattering of mass market trade books, especially those by authors sympathetic to the Society, such as Taylor Caldwell. But most of the titles are published by Western Islands, their own firm, and have a Birchian flavor: *Naked Communist, Reds in America, I Was a Slave in Russia, The Red Web*, and so forth. Also for sale are bumper stickers, flag kits, plus innumerable books and recordings by the seminal figure, Robert Welch.

Welch occupies a regal-sized office on the second floor. At 78 he is a bit hard of hearing but has made few other concessions to old age, often putting in 20-hour days and sleeping over on the couch in his office.

Welch fiddles with a cigar as he discourses on the Society's primary goal: "To get rid of the communists. To throw

out the communist forces and powers and influences in this country."

Each summer the Society publishes a "scoreboard issue" in their monthly magazine, *American Opinion*, listing the percentage of communist influence among the nations of the world. Twenty years ago the U.S. was assessed at a 20-40 percent share, today it's pegged at 60-80 percent. A common criticism against Welch has been his tradition of crying wolf: that the Reds are coming, coming.

"I'll bet you the people in Cambodia don't think so," Welch snorts. "Or Vietnam, or Portugal. The point is the people who are saying we're crying wolf are the damn wolves."

"Most of my feelings about actual communists is pity for them. They are a stupid bunch of cattle being used by a superior bunch of tyrants."

"The Insiders."

But the old communist scare has evolved into a new theory involving "The Insiders." This, Welch says, is a group of power-hungry businessmen, headed by David Rockefeller, who plan to take over the world and establish a one-world government by 1989. Currently they are using the Trilateral Commission, a private international organization spawned by Rockefeller in 1973, to lay their groundwork.

Welch maintains that since Zbigniew Brzezinski was appointed as the Trilateral Commission's first director and went on to select its 200-plus members, including then-Gov. Jimmy Carter, the Insiders therefore had a hand in getting Carter elected, who, in turn, selected Brzezinski

Continued on page 18.

THE JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY, AFTER TWENTY YEARS,
IS STILL GOING AND GROWING. WELCH ONCE
CALLED EISENHOWER A DEDICATED COMMUNIST.